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Algeria

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) won outright 189 out of 228 seats in national legislative elections, Algiers radio reported. The FIS leader and politicians throughout the political spectrum gave several interviews to Algiers media.

Israel

Asked about the creation of a separate Palestinian state, the envoy to Washington told Jerusalem television that "we will prevent such an outcome, if need be, even by force. The agriculture minister officially resigned, IDF radio reported, and several ministers spoke to Jerusalem television about the possibility of early elections. Shamir said territorial integrity was the "be-all and end-all," the television disclosed.

Palestinian Affairs

Hanan 'Ashrawi said there would be "no radical change" in the composition of the Palestinian delegation to talks with Israel, Jerusalem's Arabic-language radio reported. Yasir 'Arafat sent an "important message" to King Fahd, according to Algiers Voice of Palestine, which also reported the proceedings of a PLO Executive Committee session.

Libya

A Foreign Liaison Bureau statement condemned U.S. renewal of economic sanctions, JANA reported. The foreign liaison secretary discussed Lockerbie in an interview with the London paper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT.

Lebanon

A car bomb killed 13 and injured around 100, according to Voice of Lebanon, which added that a second device had been defused.

Iraq

Saddam met with industrial sector officials and held talks attended by (former defense minister) "Staff Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan, who used to supervise the industrial sector," INA reported.

Tunisia

The defense minister denied that the country is occupying a portion of Algerian territory, but told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT "it was difficult to say that there were no border disputes" between the two countries.

Kuwait

The country "will not concede one barrel of its oil production quota," the petroleum minister told Kuwait radio.

Qatar

The Iranian defense minister departed after a visit, WAKH disclosed.

Iran

French Foreign Ministry official Francois Scheer arrived for talks, according to Tehran radio, which later reported that a memorandum of understanding to resolve the 12-year financial dispute between the two countries had been signed. A commentary on Tehran international radio viewed the outcome of elections in Algeria.

Jordan

The Iranian vice president for parliamentary affairs arrived with a message from Hashemi-Rafsanjani for King Husayn, IRNA reported.

Mauritania

The Supreme Court approved the presidential candidacy of Moustapha Ould Salek, a former colonel who led a military coup in 1978, Libreville radio reported.

India

The government is "firm" on holding elections in Punjab this February, the home minister told Delhi radio. Boris Yeltsin will "likely" visit the country early in 1992, a Russian diplomat told the radio.

Bangladesh

Talks with Burma aimed at defusing tension along the border are set for 31 December, Dhaka radio reported.

Palestinian Affairs

Composition of Delegation to Talks May Change

JN2812175591 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Basim Abu-Sumayyah report from "the Israeli occupied territory"]

[Excerpt] An authoritative Palestinian source has informed our radio that the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks may undergo substantive changes to its structure before the convocation of the next round of negotiations. The source said that the delegation's formation has always been subject to change, adding that some members will be replaced and some specialists and experts in political, legal, and economic affairs will be added to the membership of the delegation.

The source affirmed that the next round of talks will be held in Washington on 7 January. Two rounds of corridor talks will be held between the Israeli delegation and the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation in the U.S. State Department, the source added, prior to beginning official negotiations, which will take place on two tracks. [passage omitted]

'Ashrawi: 'No Radical Change'

JN2912202591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Report by Sa'id Mu'addi, from "With the Events" program; passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] As 7 January, the date when bilateral talks will resume in Washington between Arab and Israeli delegations, including the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, draws nearer, news agencies are reporting that the Palestinian team may be changed, with some members being replaced by legal and economic experts. Commenting on this, Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian team, says:

"I have not heard the details of these reports, but obviously there will be no radical change in the composition of the Palestinian delegation. There might be additions, if necessary, but so far, the final shape of any such additions is not definite. The withdrawal of some members or the changing of others is out of the question."

The outcome of the bilateral talks in Washington will influence the multilateral negotiations that are to be held in Moscow toward the end of next month. With regard to the participation of the Palestinian side in the Moscow talks, Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi says:

"The situation is still not clear. Because the multilaterals involve regional and long-term issues, the structure of Palestinian participation should be changed. We do not accept the idea that the terms of Palestinian participation in the bilaterals apply to the multilaterals. The terms of participation must be changed. We must see some kind of substantial success in the bilaterals given the fact that, so far, we have not actually begun bilateral negotiations. Two viewpoints exist: Some of us see in the multilaterals a kind of international conference, and the fact that these talks might serve to put pressure on the bilaterals. Others believe that the talks will somewhat downgrade the achievements of the bilaterals because they will attract all of the limelight and divert attention from substantive political issues."

Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Advisory Council, has stated that contacts have recently been held with members of the Likud Party in a bid to surmount the obstacles that had impeded the bilateral talks in Washington. We asked Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi whether consultations on the resumption of the bilaterals on 7 January in Washington have been held in the past few days. She says:

"Contacts are continuing between the Palestinian and the Jordanian sides, as well as among the other Arab countries and the United States, acting in the capacity of a sponsor state. The aim is to solve the problem and to remove the obstacles placed by the Israelis. We are not asking for undermining or nullifying the existence of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. We do not, however, accept the deletion of the Palestinian identity or the imposition of a third track on the two-track negotiations."

'Arafat Sends 'Important' Message to King Fahd

LD2812193491 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], the brother commander, sent an important message today to King Fahd Bin-'Abd- al-'Aziz Al Su'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, concerning developments in the Palestinian issue. The message also contained the appreciation of the Palestinian people and leadership for the attitudes of support and backing that the Kingdom has displayed under the leadership of King Fahd toward our Palestinian people and their just cause in various fields and international gatherings.

PLO Leadership Views Washington Talks

JN2912172591 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1603 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Under the chairmanship of brother leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], PLO Executive Committee chairman, and with the participation of a number of Palestinian leaders, the PLO Executive Committee held a series of meetings on 26 and 27 December to discuss the latest developments in the occupied homeland and the political situation. The committee made several decisions and formed basic views concerning various issues.

The committee held a detailed and in-depth discussion of the proceedings and outcome of the bilateral talks held in Washington from 4 to 18 December. It highly appreciated the role played by the Palestinian negotiating

delegation. It noted the delegation's faithful expression of the Palestinian national stand, its protection of the unity of representation, its preservation of the independent Palestinian identity, and its defense of our people's rights and sacred objectives. The delegation invoked the militant spirit of our people and the valiant popular intifadah's determination to continue to confront the occupation authorities and their oppressive and terrorist practices.

The Palestinian delegation adopted a principled and responsible position out of its concern to make the negotiation process a success so that a just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy can be achieved. It confronted all the attempts by Israel to obstruct the negotiations, to procrastinate, to undermine the unity of the negotiating process, and, ultimately, to torpedo the essence and bases of the negotiations. This Israeli objective was made even more clear by the fact that Israel's position at the negotiations was associated with an escalation of oppression and terrorism and an acceleration in settlement activity in the occupied homeland. This is evidenced by what happened in the steadfast town of Silwan, as well as being reflected in the imposition of long and continuous curfews on many cities and large areas with the goal of breaking the steadfastness of our people and their rallying around their national objectives and influencing the entire negotiations.

As part of its great confidence in the Palestinian delegation, the PLO Executive Committee called on the sponsors of the conference to shoulder their responsibilities by respecting their commitments and the framework on which the negotiations are based, including the need to confront Israel's attempts to obstruct the negotiations and to create new facts by proceeding with settlement activity and perpetrating other violations and crimes.

The Executive Committee discussed the positions adopted by the fraternal Arab countries participating in the negotiations, their concern for the unity of the Arab position, and their endeavors to block Israel's attempts to single out parties or to divide rights. In this respect, the Committee highly valued the position of fraternal Jordan and its negotiating delegation for its defense of Palestinian representation and the Palestinian national identity and for its eagerness to safeguard the fraternal and fateful Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

The Executive Committee reviewed the political activity and the contacts and visits made by the Palestinian leadership, at the head of which is brother Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine, to China, Kazakhstan, Vietnam, and the DPRK. It highly valued the positions of the leaders of those countries and their solidarity with the struggle and rights of our people. It valued Kazakhstan's recognition of the state of Palestine and its establishment of official relations with it. The Committee called for promoting these relations to serve the common goals of safeguarding peoples' rights, independence, and free development.

The PLO Executive Committee made several decisions concerning the next political moves that must be made to serve the continuity of the Palestinian national struggle, at the center of which are the valiant intifadah and the great steadfastness offered by the continuing Palestinian national struggle. The aim is to achieve our people's sacred rights to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state on our national soil, with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Comment Urges Arab Coordination Ahead of Talks

LD3012003291 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Brothers: The Palestinian call for establishing Arab coordination, especially with regard to political issues that concern the Arab world, foremost among which is the peace process, comes a few days before the third round of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks is convened in Washington. It also comes at a time when it has been reiterated that some progress has been achieved regarding Israel's readiness to negotiate with an independent Palestinian delegation, which Israel rejected up to the end of the second round of talks in the U.S. capital.

Between the second round of talks and the forthcoming round, important developments have taken place, on the international as well as the regional and local level. The Soviet Union has disappeared from the political world map and has been replaced by the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Russia has taken the place of the former Soviet Union in the UN Security Council.

On the regional level, the security arrangements in the Gulf region and the rapprochement between Iran, the West, and the Gulf in this regard constitute the most prominent development of late.

On the local level, the occupied territories have witnessed more economic deterioration, while Israel has continued its settlement policies. The Israeli Government has given more than one proof of its determination to build more settlements, the latest of which was a pledge to the extreme right-wing parties to allocate large sums to finance the building of settlements.

These developments which are taking place deserve serious appraisal by the Arab world, especially since the forthcoming talks in Washington will be conducted in the absence of the Soviet Union and the sponsorship of Russia alongside the United States. At a time when the Arab and Palestinian sides have called upon the United States to work toward committing Israel to the necessity of freezing the building of settlements, we find that such building has increased and the measures taken by Israel in the occupied territories have become more stringent.

Arab coordination is an urgent need imposed not only by the new developments, but also by certain expected developments. Foremost among these is the fact that fateful issues, relating not only to this or that Arab party, but also to the whole Arab destiny and future, will be the

subject of discussions at the peace talks, if these talks are to achieve any progress. These issues also will be raised at the various international forums where the outline of the new world will be drawn.

We do not need to stress that a unified Arab stand with regard to these issues is likely to achieve the best results on this level, but we should warn the Arab world against continuing to play the role of spectator toward what is happening, especially toward the issues affecting the heart of its future and its fate.

Perhaps the important and rapid developments which are being witnessed constitute the greatest evidence of the importance of the time element in determining the international, regional, and local political paths. Consequently, to continue to ignore this element means that these paths will be drawn away from any Arab influence, and perhaps even away from the Arab interests, most of the time. Therefore, Arab coordination, which is the minimum required at this stage, should be a tangible reality in these fateful conditions, with regard to the Arab nation, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf. The effects of what has happened in Moscow also touch the Arab region, and what may happen in Washington in the forthcoming round of talks will reflect in its effects, positively or negatively, on the Middle East as well. It is high time for all the Arabs to wake up from this terrible nightmare, and to turn their attention to their future and fate.

PLO Recognizes Independence of Former Republics

LD2912214791 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] An official Palestinian spokesman announced shortly before noon today that the PLO Executive Committee has decided at a meeting in Tunis that the state of Palestine and the PLO recognize the independence of all 15 states that used to be part of the former Soviet Union.

The spokesman expressed the hope that Palestine's relations with these states will consolidate and that these states' effective and constructive role in the Middle East peace process will continue.

Algeria

Results of National Elections Reported

FIS Wins 189 of 228 Seats Outright

LD2812130491 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The first round of the first multiparty legislative elections in the history of Algeria has resulted in a clear success for the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], which won 189 seats out of the 228 electoral constituencies in which elections were completely decided.

The Socialist Forces Front [FFS] led by Hocine Ait Ahmed finished second with 28 seats, while the National Liberation Front [FLN] is in third with only 16 seats.

These results are still preliminary. The Constitutional Council alone has the right to confirm the results and will do so at a later date after considering any protests the parties may make. It is definite, however, that the FIS is now in a better position than any other party, according to observers.

FIS candidates will contest 188 electoral constituencies in the second round; its candidates are leading in 145 of them. The FLN will have a good chance in 46 constituencies in the second round; its chances are weak in another 128. The FFS will contest the second round in 19 constituencies, in four of which it is well-placed.

Official Partial Results

LD2712201491 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] We begin this bulletin with the first multiparty legislative elections in Algeria's contemporary history. Mr. Larbi Belkheir, minister of the interior and local communities, held a news conference at which he announced the official partial results of the first round of these elections:

[Begin Belkheir recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Ladies and gentlemen, here are the partial results so far, from 386 electoral districts out of a total of 430. We have not yet received the results for 44 electoral districts. In the first round, 206 electoral districts were won outright. Out of these 206, 167 went to the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], 20 to the Socialist Forces Front [FFS], 16 to the National Liberation Front [FLN], and three to independent candidates. Therefore, the elections will go to a second round in 180 districts, according to our information. The candidates are divided as follows. There are 171 candidates from the FIS, 158 from the FLN, 13 from the FFS, seven independents, three from the Rally for Culture and Democracy, three from the Islamic Society Movement, two from al-Nahdah, and two from the Social Democratic Party.

I reiterate that these results are provisional. The electoral committees have not yet rounded up their proceedings. Furthermore, the power to announce the final results lies with the Constitutional Council, in accordance with the law. This means that they could be subject to change, in view of remarks and reservations expressed by some candidates. Peace be upon you. [end recording]

Islamic Front Official Interviewed

LD2812204191 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Interview with Abdelkader Hachani, chairman of the Provisional Bureau of the Islamic Salvation Front, by unidentified correspondent—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Mr. Hachani, what is the reaction of the Islamic Salvation Front to the results of the first round of the elections? Does the FIS agree that the elections were conducted impeccably?

[Hachani] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Prayers and peace be upon the messenger of God. First of all, I would like to praise God Almighty for having enabled the Muslim and proud Algerians to succeed in making a historic move that will enable them to win in this world and the next. This victory, first and foremost, is a gift from God Almighty, who has assigned this historic and cultural task to this nation. I also would like to congratulate the Algerian people on their choice. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] All right, what about the preliminary results?

[Hachani] The results reported via our special network so far give the FIS a total of 190 seats in the first round, and qualify it to contest 94 percent of the total number of seats in the second round.

[Correspondent] Were the elections carried out fairly, in your opinion?

[Hachani] We believe that many quarters have made substantial efforts to ensure that these elections are held in the way they have been conducted so far. We noticed some transgressions, about which we notified the authorities concerned with the administration of the electoral process. Generally speaking, however, we can say that the process was held in a manner that allowed the Algerian people to express their opinion and their choice in complete freedom.

On Possible Early Presidential Elections

LD2912213691 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] [Announcer] Mr. Abdelkader Hachani, chairman of the Provisional Executive Bureau of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] held a news conference this evening. Ahmed Megaache followed it on television:

[Megaache] At this news conference, Mr. Hachani discussed the results obtained by the FIS in the first round of the elections.

[Begin Hachani recording] Regarding the results that we have so far been able to receive via our own network, we made these public and distributed them to you. We have more detailed results, but did not want to make them public before hearing the official results from the Constitutional Council, today, God willing. [end recording]

[Megaache] Mr. Hachani appealed for efforts within a framework of solidarity and discipline in order to secure a climate of security and stability for the citizens.

[Begin Hachani recording] We stress the need for cooperation and solidarity among all the sons of this Muslim people, in a climate of brotherhood a climate of love, so that we may get the country out of its various crises, within the framework of Islamic principles. [end recording]

[Megaache] Mr. Hachani answered questions from newsmen on the legislative elections, the position of the FIS with regard to cohabitation with the regime in power, and its foreign dealings, in the event it wins a majority of parliamentary seats in the second round.

[Announcer] Mr. Hachani also stated during his news conference that, if serious and realistic guarantees are given to his party that the prerogatives of parliament will not be withdrawn, then the Executive Bureau will propose to the FIS Consultative Council that a call for early presidential elections be postponed.

Says Constitution Will Be Respected

LD3012021691 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Excerpt] The FIS continues its efforts to dispel the fears that appeared following its victory in the first round of elections. Abdelkader Hachani [chairman of FIS Provisional Executive Bureau] said today that he will respect the Constitution and work within its framework, and dismissed the possibility of entering into an open confrontation with the president of the Republic or the National People's Army.

Mr. Abdelkader Hachani called on all dynamic forces to stand shoulder to shoulder to get the country out of the present crisis, pointing out that this year will be the end of the disasters for the Algerian people.

Mr. Abdelkader Hachani said that he completely ruled out the idea of his party's failing to get an overwhelming majority in the second round of elections. He pointed out that, if his party loses some constituencies because of appeals submitted by some parties, his party would restore them in the second round.

During his news conference, Mr. Hachani pledged to respect international conventions already signed by Algeria, pointing out that Algeria could not live isolated from the world.

With regard to the possibility of confrontations with the Army, Mr. Hachani said that the Army's job constitutionally is to protect the people's opinion. We say that if we take power through elections, the Army would be required to respect the people's opinion and to defend it. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Interviewed

LD2712210491 Paris Antenne-2 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Ghozali in Algiers by correspondent Francoise Joly in Algiers and announcer Bruno Masure in Paris—live]

[Text] [Masure] Mr. Ghozali, what do you think of the real rout of the former sole party, the FLN?

[Ghozali] Good evening. The results are not definitive; the official ones will be announced by the Constitutional Council. A little over half of the seats were taken in the first round and we see that the results obtained by the FIS are considerable. I heard a comment that the elections were not clean and honest. I think this touches on the real issue and is perhaps one of the reasons for the current results. To some extent it castigates the so-called democratic class or so-called democratic parties who planned for the wrong enemy. Since its formation, this government pledged to organize free, honest, and clean elections. I am satisfied that the government has fulfilled its commitments.

[Joly] Mr. Bruno Masure was asking you what you thought of the rout of the FLN?

[Ghozali] It is what I have just said: it is the rout of all democratic parties, but this can be remedied. If these parties pull themselves together and manage to establish the stakes of the game... [changes thought] Democracy is the business of each individual citizen. This must be clearly understood; it is not a matter of issuing a decree. Democracy has its rules and I have the strong feeling that the results today have roots in the fact that the rules were not observed. Each of us has a lot to learn regarding democratic culture.

[Joly] The second round of elections will take place in just over 15 days. Everything leads us to believe that the FIS will obtain a majority in parliament. Can one see things differently?

[Ghozali] There are 201 seats left. For the FIS to obtain an absolute majority it must win 29 more seats. The ball is in the court of all parties which claim to be democratic [words indistinct].

[Joly] Can one imagine a coalition government with the FIS?

[Ghozali] My government calls itself independent of all parties. I do not advocate either a coalition or national unity before knowing the results. I think that before we speak of a coalition we must agree on a platform.

Democracy feeds on differences but there are issues on which one cannot fail to agree: the rejection of violence, the rejection of law breaking and infringement of democratic rules. The experience of the past few months shows that the so-called democratic parties have dozed off somewhat in this respect. They practiced a head-in-the-sand policy and I think that they are paying for this today. The abstention rate has been very high.

[Joly] In the past few weeks you traveled high and wide to call on the population to participate in the elections. Were you not heard?

[Ghozali] I did not wage an election campaign myself. I waged a civic campaign. I tried to make Algerians understand that this election is very different from the previous ones and that it will indeed enable them to choose their true representatives. I was not the only one, however, and in any case, I could not convince all alone. The campaign waged by the so-called democratic parties was decisive. They all reckoned on the wrong enemy and preferred to attack the government [words indistinct].

[Masure] Mr. Ghozali, Francoise Joly, we are unfortunately forced to put an end to this interview. Prime Minister, thank you for making your first comments on Antenne-2.

FLN Leader on Voter Nonparticipation

LD2812225491 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The election results reflect the will of the people and the citizens are responsible for their own choice. That was what Mr. Abdelhamed Mehri, secretary general of the National Liberation Front, said when interviewed by Rachida Hammadi. I invite you to listen to him:

[Begin recording] [Hammadi] Mr. Mehri, could you tell us if you and the FLN had expected these partial results of the legislative elections?

[Mehri] As a matter of fact, we did not try to predict the results of the elections too closely because we know that the subject and the experience are new. We did not try to lay down figures or numbers of seats, but we took part in these elections in order to consolidate the democratic course. Obviously, we had hoped that the FLN results would be better, but we are facing the people's choice. The people have chosen their representatives in total freedom and no doubt they are aware of the responsibility of that choice. [two-minute break in reception] A great number of Algerians did not take part in the vote. Nonparticipation is a political attitude the citizen could come to regret later on. [end recording]

Socialist Forces Front Leader Speaks

LD2812230391 Paris Antenne-2 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] [Announcer] With us live from Algiers, together with Francoise Joly, we have Hocine Ait Ahmed, one of the great historic leaders of the war of independence, leader of the Socialist Forces Front, which won the consolation prize yesterday, as one of the headlines in the Algiers press put it this evening. The FFS received 25 seats in the first round yesterday, most of them in Kabylie, against only 16 for the National Liberation Front. Good evening, Mr. Ait Ahmed, thank you for joining us. The first question: Are we likely see a sort of paradox fraught with danger for the future: A Kabylie completely isolated within an Algeria turned Islamic?

[Ait Ahmed] You know, I believe that the regime's strategy has been to demote Kabylie and to prevent me from establishing myself in the rest of Algeria. Now, not only has Kabylie behaved like one man—it voted 99 percent for the FFS—but we have hundreds of thousands of votes outside Kabylie. We would have liked the media to have publicized the upsurge of the tens of thousands of young people during the electoral campaign, and you will see that there is no reason to be excessively worried. The Islamic Salvation Front is an important and serious phenomenon, but I believe Algeria is very far from being Iran.

[Joly] Mr. Ait Ahmed, are you ready to stand together with the FLN to bar the way of the Islamic Front in the second round of these elections?

[Ait Ahmed] Madame, do not ask me to change my strategy. We always have said: Neither a police state, nor a fundamentalist state. It is obvious that the FLN has led our country into this dead end, and, furthermore, the FIS has not missed a chance throughout this campaign to say that Islam is the opposite of human rights, is the opposite of democracy. So, since neither of them guarantee the right to be different, the right to have an alternation of power, we cannot take up a position in support of either the one or the other. Our ally is the Algerian people.

[Joly] You were one of the first to protest last June at the state of seige. If, tomorrow, the Army were to appear as a sort of final rampart against the arrival of an Islamic state, what would you do?

[Ait Ahmed] Madame, I can assure you that we are building the FFS to be the real rampart against which all attempts to smash or to block the democratic process will be broken. In any case, we were against the state of seige because we considered that the situation was not such as to be worth calling on the Army: The situation could have been mastered. Furthermore, we noted that for three years, the FLN regime has not wanted the electoral deadline, quite simply because it does not want to give up power.

[Joly] Even if the FIS really wins these elections overwhelmingly?

[Ait Ahmed] I am quite unworried, I can assure you. I am quite unworried. I know what I am saying. I am a man who tends much more toward military analyses, having been responsible for the organization of the Special Organization [forerunner of National Liberation Army]. So, not only do I bear in mind the forces that are

on the ground, but also how to carry things out in the short term. I can assure you that nothing has been lost in Algeria, that the second round perhaps will enable us to look at the political map in quite a different way.

[Announcer] One last question, if you can hear me. LE MONDE announced this evening that President Chadli is tempted to resign rather than run the country jointly. What, in your opinion, will the Algerian head of state do?

[Ait Ahmed] Well, I believe that it would be better to ask the head of the state. We do not know the secrets of the high-ranking officials. At any rate, the FFS always has favored a popular strategy, not a strategy of palace intrigues, so to speak. Anyway, I believe that the Algerian people have shown their maturity during this first round. It is thanks to the Algerian people that the first multiparty legislative elections took place in a calm atmosphere, because the authorities did everything possible to scare the population and cause it to worry.

[Joly] All the same, the population did not take part in huge numbers in these elections.

[Ait Ahmed] It did not take part in big numbers because it has been scared, because everything possible was done to exasperate the social groups with high prices, and also because 900,000 cards were not distributed. These cards were not distributed in the areas where we are deeply rooted.

[Announcer] Mr. Ait Ahmed, I thank you for these comments and we will, of course, have the opportunity to meet again during the campaign for the second round, which is expected to take place on 16 January. Thanks to you and to Francoise Joly, who followed these elections in Algeria for us.

'Great Concern' Over FIS Victory

LD2912224891 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Yesterday we broadcast comments of the winning parties in the first round of the legislative elections. Today, in his first statement, Hocine Ait Ahmed, leader of the Socialist Forces Front [FFS], spoke at a news conference attended by local and foreign journalists. Here is report from our representative Masoud Ben Rabi:

[Ben Rabi] Because of the policy of the two pillars, the elections were a nemesis and an ethical revolution against the regime. This was the reply of Ait Ahmed. He said that we have not yet reached the point of no return.

In his replies, Ait Ahmed concentrated on the premise that the Islamic Salvation Front was a democratic pillar, now that the election booths have had their say.

[Begin Ait Ahmed recording] The elections have proven the abject failure of the one-party policy. The Algerian people look today on the relative victory of the FIS with great concern. They ask about the new regime promised by the FIS officials.

Following the failure of some currents which claim to be democratic and opposing, the FIS emerges as a democratic pillar whose opposition and influence on the national level cannot be doubted.

We will not ally ourselves with the National Liberation Front or the FIS. We always have been against the policy of two pillars. This is because we have our own presence. Thanks be to God, the election booths have now proven our existence as a pillar and a political force. My strategy has been to give my life for the sake of the liberation of Algeria. I would like to offer my life for the sake of the liberation of the people.

What concerns me is that all Algerian men and women should regain confidence in themselves and in their future, and thus retrieve the lost arena. They are asked to make a historic awakening. This awakening is possible, essential, and fateful for the defense of the republic and democracy and the safety of the Algerian nation.

For this reason, in these historic conditions, I address an appeal to Algerian men and women and to all patriots and democrats to join in a peaceful procession which is to be staged on 2 January, starting from Liberation Army Street to Martyrs Square. To us, this is a very important gesture. We say to all Algerian men and women that the time has come to practice democracy. [passage omitted] God's peace and mercy be upon you. [end recording]

Party Leaders Comment

LD2912135591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Excerpts] With regard to the parties' reactions to the results of the first round of the plural legislative elections, we record the reaction of the Socialist Forces Front [FFS], which will be participating in the second round of the elections. FFS leader Hocine Ait Ahmed yesterday ruled out any possibility of alliance with the National Liberation Front [FLN] to block the way before the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], the winner of the first round of the elections. [passage omitted]

For his part, Cheikh Abdelkader Hachani, president of the FIS Provisional Executive Bureau, has stated to another French television channel, namely TF1, that all talk about Algeria's becoming another Iran is a mere propaganda campaign by Western information media. Hachani added that this talk stems from the fact that the peoples of Europe are victims of their information media, and those who believe such talk do not know the true character of the Algerian people. The Algerian people are a Muslim people which will pursue a specific road back to the fundamentals, he added.

Cheikh Hachani denied that the FIS plans to confine women to homes or to set up popular courts akin to those

in Iran. He said that he is totally confident that his party will win an overwhelming majority in the second round of the elections.

Replying to a question about relations with the outside world, Hachani said that he cannot imagine Algeria to be completely isolated from the world around it. [passage omitted]

Here is the position of the Arab Islamic Rally as uttered by its president, Ali Zeghdoud:

[Begin recording] The Arab Islamic Rally salutes the Arab Muslim people of Algeria for the discipline they showed during the legislative elections, thus thwarting the hopes of their enemies, who were expecting to see anarchy and trouble reign over the national arena. With all pride, we salute the spirit of responsibilty depicted by the Arab Muslim Algerian citizen, who paved the way for the Islamic state in Algeria.

[Correspondent] Mr. Zeghdoud, are there any chances for alliances in the second round?

[Zeghdoud] The Arab Islamic Rally calls on all its strugglers and supporters to vote for FIS candidates in the second round and to offer them support in the upcoming election campaign.

[Correspondent] Mr. Zeghdoud, what will be the fate of those parties which have no bases?

[Zeghdoud] The parties which have no bases, particularly those with secular tendencies, have no alternative but to withdraw from the political arena. [end recording]

As to the views of the Algerian Movement for Justice and Development party [MAJD] on the results of the first round of elections, its leader, Kasdi Merbah, says:

[Begin recording] [Merbah] [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Kasdi Merbah. Are there any chances of alliances in the second round?

[Merbah] First we have to learn the final official results. We cannot have alliances because we do not have any more candidates. But we can, for example, instruct our strugglers how to vote in favor of other parties in light of the results. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Appeals Procedure Detailed

LD2812213491 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Dec 91

["Text" of Interior Ministry statement issued in Algiers on 28 December]

[Text] After receiving numerous requests, the minister of interior and local communities has stated that the election law lays down the method to be followed in supervising and carrying out the legislative elections. The procedure is specified in Article 100 of the election law. That article says that every voter or society that has a political nature taking part in the elections has the right to object to the way in which the voting took place by submitting an application, in the form of an ordinary petition, which the objector may deliver to the control office of the Constitutional Council within 48 hours of the announcement of the results. The Constitutional Council advises the deputy (to whose) election objection is made to submit a written reply within four days from the date of notification.

After that period has lapsed, the Constitutional Council will look into the legal claim of the appeal within three days. If it becomes apparent that the appeal has any basis, the council can issue a decision either canceling the election over which a dispute has arisen or redraft the official report on the results and declare which candidate has officially won the election.

Revolutionary Military Group Reportedly Founded

JN2812203691 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Qusayy Salih al-Darwish report from Algiers carried on the "Panorama" program]

[Excerpt] A number of Algerian papers have received anonymous calls announcing the birth of a secret revolutionary military organization, saying this announcement is their Communique No. 1 and that other communiques will be released very soon.

It is difficult to evaluate this news item in an atmosphere rife with rumors, most of which are based on logical analysis and tangible evidence. While many people doubt the second round of elections will be held at all, others say the security departments have documents that incriminate the Islamic Salvation Front in plotting against the country's security and national unity. Other rumors speak of a cabinet reshuffle before the second round, something which could change the course of the elections in the remaining regions and constituencies. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Trade Memorandum Signed With Russia

NC2812081391 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 28 Dec 91

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-AHRAM today notes that Egypt and the Russian Federation have, for the first time, signed a memorandum of understanding regarding continued trade and exchange of commodities, goods, machines, and materials for the first half of 1992.

Daily Urges Stronger Ties With Kazakhstan

NC2912072291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0625 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Cairo, 29 Dec (MENA)—AL-AHRAM comments in its editorial today on the Republic of Kazakhstan's official full recognition of the Palestinian state. It says: This mutual recognition will have great consequences at the practical level and is notably significant. With this recognition, the newly independent Republic of Kazakhstan is giving a clear signal to the Arab and Islamic countries that this republic, in which the majority of the population is Muslim, wants to strengthen its relations with the Arab and Islamic world and wants to increase its interest in issues that concern this world.

AL-AHRAM adds: Kazakhstan's desire to strengthen relations with the Arab countries is positive and should be reciprocated at the Arab level not only because it is a nuclear superpower, but also because it is the key to the rest of the Islamic Central Asian region; has political, economic, and military weight; and because in view of the changing relations in the international relations of the newly independent Central Asian republics, it would be beneficial for the Arab countries and peoples to see the two sides work toward strengthening relations at all levels based on mutual benefits and furthering cultural rapprochement between the two sides.

Bulgaria's Ganev Offers To Host Peace Talks

NC2612160991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1325 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Stoyan Ganev, Bulgarian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has said that he offered, when President Mubarak received him, to host the bilateral peace negotiations between the Arab sides and Israel, as well as the multilateral talks, if these negotiations cannot be held in Moscow in view of current developments there.

During a news conference he held today at the conclusion of his visit to Egypt, Ganev stressed Bulgaria's stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the need to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy, especially Resolutions 242 and 338, to realize peace and security for all the region's peoples, including the Palestinians.

The Bulgarian foreign minister clarified that his talks in Egypt, which he held with President Husni Mubarak; his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa; Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning; and other officials, have affirmed the depth of relations between the two countries. He pointed out that he reached agreement with the Egyptian officials during the visit to bolster economic and trade relations on new bases. He said Bulgaria and Egypt within the coming three months will sign two agreements to prevent double taxation and encourage investment between the two countries.

Ganev clarified that Egypt and Bulgaria have decided to set up joint investment companies in tourism, construction, and trade cooperation.

The Bulgarian minister clarified that his country wishes to set up friendship and cooperation relations with Greece and Turkey. He pointed out that the Bulgarian people are of Turkic stock and enjoy their full rights in Bulgaria, especially after the changes which took place in his country and which have given the citizens all their liberties.

Ganev affirmed his country's hopes for cooperation and work with the EC and NATO, as well as the republics which have succeeded the former Soviet Union.

The Bulgarian official also will visit Jordan and Syria after his Egypt visit. In January, he will visit Lebanon and Syria.

Departs Cairo for Amman

NC2612181191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Dec 91

[Text] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Stoyan Ganev, Bulgarian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, left Cairo for Amman this evening at the end of a four-day visit to Egypt.

In a pre-departure statement, the Bulgarian minister said that he will convey an oral message from President Husni Mubarak to the Bulgarian leader. The message deals with the means to bolster the relations between the two countries, and with Egypt's positive position toward the Bulgarian proposal to host a stage of the Middle East peace talks, Minister Ganev said. He added that President Mubarak asked him to convey his greetings and those of the Egyptian people to the Bulgarian people.

In his statement, the Bulgarian minister said that he invited President Mubarak to visit Bulgaria and that President Mubarak has accepted the invitation, the date of which will be fixed later.

During the visit, Minister Ganev conveyed a written message to President Mubarak from his Bulgarian counterpart.

Qatari Amir Comments on Mubarak Talks, Departs

NC2912084491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0750 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Cairo, 29 Dec (MENA)—Amir of Qatar Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani has stressed that he and President Husni Mubarak share views on the issues raised during their discussions, which dealt with the developments in the Gulf region in particular and the Middle East in general and with means of strengthening security and stability in these areas.

In a statement he today made before departing Cairo after an official send-off, his highness the amir of Qatar

expressed his thanks and gratitude to President Mubarak and the Egyptian people for the warm welcome he received during his visit.

Following is the text of the statement:

At the conclusion of my visit to my second homeland, the Arab Republic of Egypt, I am pleased to express my deepest thanks and gratitude to my dear brother His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and his noble people for the warm welcome accorded us during our visit. This visit gave us an opportunity to consult with my brother his excellency the president on issues concerning our two countries and our nation, including the developments in the Gulf region in particular and the Middle East in general and the means of strengthening security and stability in both regions.

We reached identical views on all these matters, including the means of strengthening Arab solidarity and cooperation, which is indispensable to our Arab nation in these critical circumstances and the Middle East peace process, which we support. We call on the international community to exert its utmost efforts to bring about just, lasting, and comprehensive solutions for the region's problems and issues so security and construction can prevail and so the region can contribute actively to international cultural progress.

Our talks also dealt with means of supporting and consolidating our two countries' cooperative relations in all spheres and of continuing the contacts and coordination at all levels on all issues of mutual concern.

May God Almighty support us in serving our peoples and achieving their hopes of glory, strength, and prosperity.

Sudanese-Iranian Military Cooperation Detailed

NC2712162891 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic
22 Dec 91 p 9

["Brothers Page" report by Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman: "Dimensions of Military Cooperation Between Khartoum and Tehran"]

[Text] In December 1990, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz paid a secret visit to Khartoum with a message from Saddam Husayn to Sudanese leader 'Umar al-Bashir and a message from Saddam for al-Bashir to convey to Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. Afterward, al-Bashir visited Iran to mediate between Iraq and Iran so the latter could assist Iraq militarily during the Gulf crisis, but this mission failed. The visit, however, began a phase of military cooperation between Iran and Sudan. The chief aspects of that cooperation are as follows:

Iranian military experts have trained Islamic cadres from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Egypt, Algeria, and Tunisia at the "Arus" training camp, which currently houses over 2,000 Iranian revolutionary guards.

Three navy boats [zawariq bahariyah], presented as a gift from the Shah of Iran to Ja'far Numayri [former president of Sudan], were renovated. One of the boats was equipped with a Chinese-made sea-to-sea SSN.STYX [preceding word in English] Silk Worm missile launcher. The training of Sudanese servicemen on the use of this launcher has been interrupted due to the repercussions of the Gulf war, but will be resumed.

During Al-Bashir's visit to Tehran, an agreement was reached to supply the Sudanese Armed Forces with personnel weapons [aslihat al-afrad] to use in the guerrilla war against John Garang's Sudanese People's Liberation Army.

According to sources, an Iranian ship unloaded at a Sudanese Red Sea port a shipment including approximately 1,000 RPG launchers, mobile field artillery and about 20 Chinese-made Type-90 fighting tanks. Some of these tanks were later destroyed in the first encounter with Garang forces. Lam Akul [name as published] disclosed this during a visit to Cairo.

The shipment also included various ammunition for Sudanese artillery and spare parts for Sudanese fighter planes. The spare parts were not used because the Sudanese forces lacked the necessary maintenance expertise.

During that visit, al-Bashir requested a steady supply of oil. Iran promised to consider the request and, in turn, asked that Arab Shiite elements be allowed to enter Sudan and assume supervisory positions at the Islamists' training camps in Sudan. This development led to a major debate on the nature of the Iranian president's accompanying delegation during his recent visit to Sudan.

The delegation included Iranian Defense Minister 'Ali Akbar Torkan, over 160 military officials from the various Iranian Armed Forces services, and some hardline religious leaders. Undoubtedly these officials went to Sudan to closely examine the three new training camps under construction there. The Iranian Government has provided approximately $15 million to establish these camps, according to well-informed sources.

According to the same sources, these camps, in addition to providing Islamic religious lectures and instruction, will provide military instruction and instruction on methods to Islamize current Arab regimes. Iran believes that substantial financial support should be given to all Islamic movements, particularly those in Tunisia and Algeria where Islamic movements have considerable influence.

Libya

Government Condemns Renewal of U.S. Sanctions

LD2812211791 Tripoli JANA in English 1441 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Tripoli, al-Kanun December 28 (JANA)—The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation issued a statement condemning the decision of the Bush administration to renew the economic sanctions imposed on Great Jamahiriyah since 1986.

In its statement, the bureau considered President Bush's step to [word indistinct] the economic sanctions against Libya as a further escalation of the arbitrary and tyrannical measures which contradict the principles of international law and the aims of the United Nations. The text reads as follows:

The Government of the United States of America renewed its economic sanctions against Libya. The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation considers this step as an escalation of the arbitrary and tyrannical measures imposed on Libya by the USA since 1986 and a deliberate attempt to harm the Libyan Arab people and its economic and social development. Also this measure is not compatible with international law, the aims of the United Nations and relations between states.

The USA embarked on this step at a time the world is witnessing rapprochement in international relations, lessening of tension, endeavours to settle differences by peaceful means and calls for economic cooperation between states and economic and political groupings.

While it draws the attention of the international public opinion and the governments and peoples of the world to danger of this behaviour, the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation calls upon the Government of the United States to reconsider its hostile stance towards Libya whose policies are founded on peaceful basis and respect for the others' options, nonintervention in the internal affairs of others and rejection of the method of the use of the economy as an economic weapon for pressure to attain political gains.

The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation urges the peoples of the world to stand in solidarity with this small country with limited means and which harnesses all its economic resources to increase its living standard and realise welfare and prosperity for its people.

Al-Bishari Interviewed on Lockerbie Crisis

PM2712164891 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 27 Dec 91 p 4

[Report on interview with Ibrahim Muhammad al-Bishari, secretary of the Libyan People's Committee for External Liaison and International Cooperation, by Munsif al-Sulaymi in Marrakesh; date not given]

[Text] Libyan Foreign Minister Ibrahim Muhammad al-Bishari has stated that a new Maghreb initiative to promote a peaceful solution to the Lockerbie crisis will materialize soon. He added that the Arab Maghreb foreign ministers will meet in January to draw up the broad outlines of an initiative to find a solution to the Lockerbie crisis.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Marrakesh, where he was attending the Maghreb ministerial conference, al-Bishari emphasized that Libya rejects terrorism, condemns those responsible for the Lockerbie incident, and refuses to be held resonsible for the incident, because it conflicts with its policies and working methods.

Al-Bishari lauded the efforts made by King Hassan II of Morocco—currently chairman of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU]—in pursuit of a peaceful solution to that problem to spare the region serious upheavals, crises, and threats to the region's stability. He pointed out that an aggression against Libya would have repercussions on the situation and stability of the entire Arab Maghreb region.

Libya, he said, has taken several legal and political initiatives with a view to finding a peaceful settlement in accordance with the UN principles, which state that force or the threat to use force must be avoided, which guarantee accused parties their legitimate rights of defense and to a fair trial, and which protect the rights of the families of the victims, all for the sake of the truth.

He said that Libya has recently received positive replies through its diplomatic contacts with France, the third Western state concerned with the Lockerbie case in addition to the United States and Britain. He expressed the hope that a meeting at judicial level between the two sides would take place.

The Libyan official disclosed that Tripoli's supreme court judges assigned by his government to investigate the charges that the two Libyan citizens bombed the U.S. airliner, have sent messages through diplomatic channels to their counterparts in Scotland, France, and the United States, urging them to obtain the transcripts of the investigations conducted in Libya for the continuation of the interrogation of the the two accused Libyans [sentence as published].

The messages addressed to the Western judges proposed meetings between the two sides to discuss the charges leveled at the Libyan nationals, either in Libya or in one of the three Western capitals. This point about a possibile meeting of judges from both sides in a Western capital is seen as an important change in the Libyan position and as a Libyan response to the U.S. and British insistence that the questioning and trial should be held in

Scotland, where the incident occurred, or in the United States, where a case was brought against Libya in the U.S. courts.

Libya, al-Bishari said, wants fairness, justice, and respect for international legitimacy, and it refuses to go down in history as a country accused of terrorism and of killing innocent people.

On Libya's reaction to the UN Security Council's draft resolution calling for economic sanctions against Libya, al-Bishari said that he had not been officially notified that any such draft was submitted to the Security Council, but that it remained a possibility. He added that to involve the Security Council in this matter indicated a predetermined intention to condemn Libya, which is innocent, and indicated the world's loss of balance and logic. He said that he hoped it would not come to that.

He explained that his country did not consider the issue to be a threat to international security and peace such as to warrant a UN Security Council debate on it. He added that it was a political and legal problem which can be solved peacefully.

Al-Bishari said that his country sensed, from the way the charges were made and from the official statements, that there was a prejudice against it and an attempt to change the Libyan political system by force. He saw that as a violation and an infringement of Libyan sovereignty and of international charters.

He added that the new world order was supposed to be based on noninterference in, and respect for, the sovereignty of states, an end to confrontation, the nonuse of force, and recourse to the method of negotiations, and peaceful solutions.

He said that the fact that Libya supported Kuwait's legitimate government at the time of the Gulf crisis and opposed the Iraqi invasion was a reflection of the Libyan position based on rejection of the logic of using force to change states, regimes, and political maps. He said that Libya should be treated like Kuwait with regard to the application of international regulations and the prevention of aggression against it by a major power.

With regard to criticisms of Libya's human rights situation made by certain international organizations, al-Bishari said that Libya was a front runner on the human rights issue and that it met the requirements spelled out in the great green document on human rights issued by the people's congresses some years ago, as well as last year's freedom-consolidating law. He affirmed that the Libayn authorities were committed to not jeopardizing the human rights of education, gathering, expression, work, and earning and regard as sacrosanct the rights of citizenship and freedom of worship.

With regard to the charges that the Libyan regime was involved in the assassination of political opponents, the Libyan official said that his country rejected the logic of assassination and persecution of opponents. Libyans living abroad, he said, are of two kinds. There are those who voluntarily chose to live abroad, which is a fundamental right guaranteed under Libyan law and which is the normal kind; but, he admitted, some Libyans have been recruited by Western intelligence services as spies working against their country, without there being any political background for that. They are individuals accused of committing crimes against public rights inside Libya. Their cases are before Libyan courts and banks. These people, he said, have gone too far because they are weak and greedy.

Al-Bishari said that Libya had given them a chance to repent and to return to their country to solve their problems legally. He made a reference to the return of some Libyans accused of spying against Libya.

With regard to the reports of the existence of a Libyan nuclear program and the use of Soviet experts, the Libyan official denied that his country had contemplated or had the desire or the ability to pursue a nuclear program. He underscored Libya's rejection of the manufacture and possession of weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear or chemical. He called for the destruction of such weapons, which are a threat to the world.

Al-Bishari said that it would be an illusion to believe that Libya was recruiting Soviet scientists in fields of war technology. He said his country needed peaceful technology for use in agriculture, education, health, and industry, instead of thinking about violence and war technology.

With regard to his assessment of the international peace efforts for the settlement of the Middle Eastern problems, he said that the Arabs proved that they wanted a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem when they went to Madrid and Washington. These were sincere intentions by the states adjacent to Israel but, he said, Israel does not accept the course of peace and continues to repress the Palestinian people and to occupy Arab territory.

Al-Bishari said that U.S. President George Bush and his secretary of state, James Baker, made commendable efforts for the implementation of the UN resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

He expressed the hope of success in the sincere U.S. efforts to establish peace. He described President Bush as a logical man who knows this world, and Baker as sensible, balanced, and sincere in his efforts, but he asked whether these sincere efforts would succeed in the face of Israeli intransigence and the Zionist lobby's pressures.

Asked about his expectations regarding a possible military strike against Libya, al-Bashari asked: What has Libya done to be the target of a military strike?

He added that if the United States dealt a military blow to Libya, it would go down in history that the American

people committed a major crime against another people. He said that the logic of peace must prevail over the logic of war.

Editor Rejects Maghreb-European Conference

LD2512101491 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] News agencies have reported that a European-Maghreb summit was recently scheduled to encompass the Arab Maghreb states and five European states situated on the Mediterranean Sea, called the five-plus-five summit. JANA's political editor commented on this meeting, saying: There are doubts over the possibility of achieving any beneficial results at this meeting, and observers express pessimism over the seriousness of a meeting which would bring together states which were colonized and states which were colonizers, particularly France, which is known for its period of long and hateful colonization of most Arab Maghreb states and which continues to make baseless threats. The editor pointed out that it is almost impossible for us to sit in front of our former colonizers on our dignity and the bodies of our children who died as victims of their savage and barbarous aggressions against our people. [sentence as heard] The editor wondered how a dialogue on cooperation could go together with the threat of aggression. He also said that a crisis of confidence surrounded this proposed meeting and threatened to jeopardize it, particularly when we know that the Great Jamahiriyah has a stand toward all that.

Mauritania

Reports on Presidential Election Campaign

Two Candidates Approved

LD2812235691 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2030 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The Clerk of Court's office at the Supreme Court places the following information at the disposal of the media:

On 24 December 1991, the Clerk of Court's office at the Supreme Court received a file which included the nomination of Osman Ould Cheikh Ahmed Abilmaali as candidate for the presidential election due to be held on 24 January 1992. On the same day, it received a file which included the nomination of Mustapha Ould Mohamed Salek for the presidential election.

The Supreme Court convened in full on 26 December 1991 to study the two aforementioned files and debate their validity. At the same session, the Supreme Court issued a ruling that the nomination of Osman Ould Cheikh Ahmed Abilmaali on 24 December 1991 fulfilled all legal conditions; it also ruled that the nomination of Mustapha Ould Mohamed Salek on 24 December 1991 did likewise. Hence, the Supreme Court accepted the validity of the two nominations, and gave each of the two nominees a receipt for his application.

Background on Former Colonel Salek

AB2712145091 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 1230 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Excerpt] The deadline for the submission of candidacies for the 24 January presidential election in Mauritania has expired. Five candidates will campaign for their compatriots' votes. The last candidate registered yesterday was that of Moustapha Ould Salek who overthrew Moktar Ould Dadah in 1978. Reporter Salem Mejbour Salem has the details from Nouakchott:

[Begin recording] For all the Mauritanians we met, namely politicians, political party officials, jurists, and intellectuals, former Colonel Moustapha Ould Salek is reportedly not welcome at all on the Mauritanian political scene. Furthermore, he is far from being a star in Mauritania. Mauritanians, after all, remember the old colonel, then chief of staff, who on 10 July 1979 led the armed insurrection that resulted in the overthrow of the first constitutional regime of Moktar Ould Dadah. Moustapha Ould Salek opened the Presidential Palace gate to the military after forcing the civilians out. Mauritanian intellectuals accuse him of causing the social and political instability prevailing in Mauritania since 10 July 1978. [passage omitted] [end recording] [Libreville Africa No. 1 in French at 1830 GMT 26 December adds the following report: "The last candidacy for the 24 January 1992 presidential elections is generating some comments, and already the candidate in question, Mr. (Hagman Ben Helmadi), is the subject of controversy. The Muslims, whom he is supposed to represent in these elections, today flatly rejected his candidacy, stating that the candidate has nothing to do with their movement."]

Ahmed Ould Dadah on Candidacy

AB2712145291 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 1230 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Excerpts] There is an about-face by the leading opposition party in Mauritania. The Union of Democratic Forces, UFD, which had decided to boycott the 24 January presidential election, has finally changed its decision, as Salem Mejbour Salem reports:

[Begin recording] The UFD activists will go to the polls on 24 January after all. The decision was made by UFD leaders at the end of a four-day meeting. The debates, which ran from 19 to 23 December, were particularly sharp. The leaders of the principal Mauritanian opposition party, who uncompromisingly oppose Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, have finally agreed to participate in the presidential election. But for whom must the UFD vote on 24 January? The question remains unanswered and the suspense remains, because if there has been agreement to lift the election boycott, the UFD has not yet defined its voting strategy. This is a result of differences within the party's executive bureau,

which opposes Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya's party. Some party officials hope that the UFD would present a candidate for the election, in the person of either the party's national leader, (El-Habra Miou Ould Habri), or (Hamdi Ould Mocnar), the former foreign minister of Moktar Ould Dadah, the first Mauritanian president. [passage omitted] [end recording]

I must add that one of the candidates who announced he would run in next year's presidential elections, Ahmed Ould Dadah, will return to Nouakchott this week. Ahmed Ould Dadah was until recently the technical adviser of the Central African Republic head of state, Andre Kolingba. He spoke to the press in Bangui, from where Alain-Georges Ngartoua reports:

[Begin recording] [Ngartoua] Ahmed Ould Dadah, candidate for the elections in Mauritania and brother of former Mauritanian president Moktar Ould Dadah, hitherto occupied the position of technical adviser in economic matters for President Andre Kolingba. [passage omitted]

Before leaving the Central African Republic, Mr. Ahmed Ould Dadah gave the reasons that led him to present his candidacy for his country's presidential election.

[Dadah] In consideration of the extremely difficult situation, which poses a threat to national unity, I was led to declare my candidacy for the presidency of the Republic with a view to the 24 January election. With regard to our internal problems, that is, ethnic problems, they have been extremely painful for me. It is one of the reasons, probably the key reason, that led me to present my candidacy. This is because I am convinced that Mauritanians, be they black Africans or Arabs, have a very strong desire to live together, in concord, in brotherliness, and in peace within people's hearts. To be able to talk about African unity, one must first establish it within one's country. We in Mauritania are lucky to have the two major elements that compose African unity, that is, black African elements and Arab elements. I would be very proud if one day it would be possible to say that I succeeded in Mauritania's restoring peace in hearts and in showing Mauritania to be an example of brotherhood and national concord.

[Ngartoua] Mr. Dadah has made solving the Mauritania-Senegal conflict and the problem of black Mauritanians one of the principal pillars of his action program. [end recording]

Black African Party Urges Boycott

AB2712154891 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 0730 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Excerpt] In Mauritania, the Party for Freedom, Equality, and Justice, the only party led by a black African, has called for the boycott of the presidential elections scheduled to take place on 24 January.

The black Africans are protesting the government's refusal to set up a commission of inquiry on the crimes committed against their community in November 1990. Over 300 people were killed, according to Amnesty International. [passage omitted]

Ould Oumah Nomination Approved

LD2712104891 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 0000 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] The Secretariat of the Supreme Court publicly states: On 18 December 1991, the Secretariat of the Supreme Court received a dossier including the nomination of Mr. Mouhamed Mahmoud Ould Oumah for the presidential elections scheduled to take place on 24 January 1992.

On 22 December 1991 the Supreme Court, with all its chambers, met to study this nomination and verify it. The Supreme Court issued a resolution stating that the nomination submitted by Mr. Mouhamed Mahmoud Ould Oumah on 12 December 1991 satisfies legal requirements. Therefore, the Supreme Court considers the nomination correct and will give the nominee a receipt for the dossier.

Twelfth Political Party Legalized

LD2712151991 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] A 12th political party, the Party of Labor and National Unity [Parti du Travail et de l'Unite Nationale], has been established. It is headed by businessman (Ali Bouna Ould Ouenina). The legalization comes 48 hours after the closure of registration of candidates for the presidential election on 24 January.

Ministry Urges Neutrality

AB2912152591 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in French 0730 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The review of the voting registers continued last week. In this regard, the communique from the Ministry of Interior, Post and Telecommunications should be recalled. The communique says that it is compulsory for all administrative authorities, civil servants, and all public officers to be strictly neutral, open, and very careful during the presidential and legislative elections that will take place in the next few months. This attitude, the communique adds, should be observed throughout the various stages of the electoral process in accordance with the constitutional laws and regulations governing elections.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Receives Iraqi Military Delegation

EA2912194091 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in English 1500 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Lieutenant-General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the RCC [Revolutionary Command Council] and commander in chief of the People's Armed

Forces, early yesterday met in his office at the general command's headquarters with the Iraqi chief of staff [General Iyad Futayyih al-Rawi] and an accompanying delegation. The visit comes within the context of the two countries' mutual relations and to participate in the country's independence celebrations.

The meeting was also attended by Lt Gen. Hasan 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Ali, chief of the general staff; Major General, Ret., 'Uthman Muhammad al-Hasan; the minister of defense; and the Iraqi ambassador to Sudan.

The Iraqi military delegation arrived in the country yesterday and was received at the airport by Lt Gen. Hasan 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Ali, the chief of the general staff, and senior military officials.

Tunisia

Minister Denies Occupation of Algerian Territory

PM2712120491 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Dec 91 p 1

[Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi report: "Tunisian Defense Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Our Forces Not Occupying Algerian Territories"]

[Text] Tunisian Defense Minister Abdelaziz Ben Dhia has denied in a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that his country is occupying part of Algerian territory.

This denial is regarded as the first official Tunisian response to a statement by former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella—within the framework of the propaganda campaign in connection with the next general elections in Algeria—in which he said that Tunis was occupying 25 square km of Algerian territory.

Also in this regard, the Tunisian defense minister said that it was difficult to say that there were no border disputes between Tunis and Algeria. He said that some border issues between the two countries were being examined by special committees that work and meet regularly, adding that the most recent meeting of these committees was in Tunis a month ago.

Minister Ben Dhia added that at every meeting these committees make clear progress on many border issues.

With regard to Tunisia's view of future defense and military cooperation among the Arab Maghreb Union states, the Tunisian defense minister said: "Before we talk about any defense or military cooperation, we should first finish building the Arab Maghreb, since this is now essential because of the gigantic steps that the European states have already taken. This means that the Arab Maghreb countries must accelerate the building process in all its economic and social aspects, including the field of coordinating their foreign policies."

Minister Ben Dhia said that the question of joint defense among the Arab Maghreb countries should be broached in the final stages of the process of building the Arab Maghreb. In this context he said: We hope that this building process will be carried out soon, especially since there are no fundamental differences among the Maghreb Union states that would prevent it.

Bahrain

Recognition Granted to New Commonwealth Republics

JN2812115691 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1110 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Manama, 28 Dec (WAKH)—An official source at the Bahraini Foreign Ministry said the State of Bahrain has decided to recognize the Russian Federation Republic and all the other republics of the new commonwealth which signed Alma-Ata agreement on 21 December 1991.

The source told the GULF NEWS AGENCY that the State of Bahrain, while declaring its recognition of the independence of these states and expressing its support for this historic event, stresses its desire to set up the new world order in support of international stability, security, and peace.

Kuwait

Commonwealth of Independent States Recognized

LD2912153491 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1458 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 29 Dec—The State of Kuwait today announced its recognition of the Russian Federation Republic and the new Commonwealth republics, expressing its hope for closer relations with all these republics.

The recognition was decided upon during the Kuwaiti Cabinet meeting this morning under the chairmanship of Shaykh Sa'd-al-Abdallah-al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister.

Dari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman the spokesman of the cabinet and minister of state for cabinet affairs, stated that the State of Kuwait declares its recognition of the Russian Federation Republic and all the republics of the Commonwealth, and looks forward to the bolstering of its relations with all these republics.

He said that this stance stems from Kuwait's belief in and respect for the peoples' will in determining their fate and defining the course of their futures, and from its wish to maintain relations of friendship and cooperation with all the republics of the group of states with common interest. [passage omitted]

Oil Minister on Determination To Protect Quota

NC2912111591 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Petroleum Minister Dr. Hamud 'Abdallah al-Ruqba has announced that Kuwait will not concede one barrel of its oil production quota. He added that if OPEC increases its production ceiling, Kuwait must get its share.

The petroleum minister noted that oil prices recently fell to $17 per barrel and if they are to fall further they will fall in April 1992 and in the subsequent months. He added that this winter's drop in oil prices was not normal, rather the result of a large surplus. He said it is difficult to assess the existing surplus.

Dr. Hamud al-Ruqba asserted that no ploys are being used, supply and demand continuing to determine prices.

Qatar

Iranian Defense Minister Torkan Arrives on Visit

JN2812102791 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0935 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Doha, 28 Dec (WAKH)—Iranian Defense Minister Akbar Torkan and his delegation arrived in Doha this morning on a three-day visit to Qatar at the invitation of Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, Qatari deputy amir, crown prince, and defense minister.

He was received on arrival by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, interior minister and acting minister of finance and oil, Staff Brigadier General Pilot Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Abdallah Al Thani, chief of staff, and ranking officers of the Qatari Armed Forces.

Torkan—Saddam 'Instability' Factor

NC2912120691 Paris AFP in English 1140 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Doha, Dec 29 (AFP)—Iraqi President Saddam Husayn is a factor of "instability" for the Gulf and his continued presence in Baghdad undermines regional security, Iranian Defense Minister Akbar Torkan has charged.

Torkan made the accusations in statements published by the local press here after his arrival Saturday in Doha for talks with his Qatari counterpart Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani on bilateral cooperation.

"Saddam Husayn is at the roots of instability in the region and his continued presence at the helms of power undermines the establishment of peace and security in the Gulf," Torkan said.

He also called for close cooperation between regional states to guarantee "security and economic boom."

Shaykh Hamad, who is also crown prince, described his talks with the Iranian official as "fruitful."

The six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes Qatar, ended its 12th summit this week with pledges to bolster political ties with Iran but excluded, for the time being, any military pact with Tehran.

Torkan said he was satisfied with the results of the summit.

Torkan Leaves Doha 30 Dec

JN3012090891 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0735 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Doha, 30 Dec (WAKH)—Iranian Defense Minister Akbar Torkan left Doha this morning at the end of a three-day visit to Qatar.

During his visit, the Iranian minister held talks with ranking Qatari officials on fields of economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries and ways of developing them, in addition to issues of joint interest and the latest developments and changes in the International and regional arenas.

Saudi Arabia

Minister Insists Iraqi Refugees Treated Well

LD3012103791 Riyadh SPA in English 1928 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Riyadh, Dec 29, SPA—Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz has confirmed that Saudi Arabia treats Iraqi refugees in the two refugee camps of Rafha' and al-Artawiyah as equals to Saudis in every way. In a statement to SPA, Prince Nayif dismissed all allegations claiming that refugees are being mistreated in the Kingdom. "Everything broadcast or said about them (Iraqi refugees) by any source is bare from the truth," he stressed. He added that the refugee camps in the kingdom are among the best of their kind anywhere. He recalled in that connection the statements made by the head of an International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) mission, which is a neutral international authority in charge of these matters. He said representatives of the ICRC are always welcome and pointed out that they receive reports from the Kingdom about the conditions of refugees as soon as they come out. Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz received in his office here today Arnold Lighthold, the leader of the ICRC mission currently visiting the Kingdom to discuss the committee's activities in the region. Lighthold told SPA that Iraqi refugees are well-treated and looked after. He stressed that refugees always live under exceptional circumstances and expressed his belief that the kingdom has realised that and exerted its utmost efforts to improve these circumstances ever since the refugees arrived in Saudi Arabia. He lauded the establishment of a refugee camp in Rafha' in such a short time and pointed to the efforts exerted by Saudi authorities to receive those people during this transitional stage, until specialised international agencies manage to find a suitable solution for the problem. "The International Committee of the Red Cross welcomes the efforts exerted by the Kingdom," he said adding that Saudi officials have been cooperative with the members of his mission. The leader of the ICRC mission said the doors of senior Saudi officials are always open and pointed to his meeting with Prince Nayif today, during which they discussed the conditions of refugees in the kingdom. He pointed out that there are four elements that affect refugees: housing facilities, food, medical services and their exceptional situation. He stressed that as far as the first three elements are concerned, the committee noticed that the kingdom has exerted intensive efforts to provide them. "As for the fourth element, the exceptional situation, it is beyond Saudi officials' control and needs coordination among several countries and specialised international agencies," he added.

United Arab Emirates

Shaykh Zayid, French Minister Meet 28 Dec

JN2812101891 Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates Radio Network in Arabic 0930 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Excerpt] His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the state, received at al-Jarr Palace this morning His Excellency French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe and the accompanying delegation. The French defense minister conveyed to his highness His Excellency French President Francois Mitterrand's greetings and best wishes. The conferees reviewed, during the meeting, the current situation in the Gulf, as well as the ways to reinforce cooperation and friendship between the United Arab Emirates and France. [passage omitted]

French Defense Minister Departs

JN2912152491 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1445 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 29 Dec (WAKH)—French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe left Abu Dhabi today at the conclusion of a visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE].

During his visit, Joxe and senior UAE officials discussed bilateral ties and ways to strengthen and promote them in the military field.

Yemen

Iranian Majles Speaker Karrubi Arrives

LD2112165191 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Mr. Karrubi, the speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles, arrived in Yemen at the head of a high-ranking delegation this afternoon. Mr. Karrubi and the accompanying delegation were welcomed at Sanaa Airport by the speaker of Yemen's parliament and a group of that country's political authorities. The first round of talks between the speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles and the speaker of Yemen's parliament were held this evening. During their talks, the two sides stressed expansion of the two countries's relations in all fields.

During that visit, Mr. Karrubi is accompanied by Mr. Vahaji, commerce minister; Mr. Foruzesh, minister of

construction Jihad, and a number of representatives of the Islamic Consultative Majles. [passage omitted]

Karrubi—Talks 'Constructive'

JN2412141891 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Iranian Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi left Sanaa this morning following a three-day official visit to our country at the invitation of his brother Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, speaker of the Council of Representatives. [passage omitted]

The brother speaker of the Iranian Majles made a predeparture statement to the Yemeni News Agency, SABA', in which he explained that the results of his visit to our country and his talks with Brother Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man and all officials that he met with were constructive and successful. He indicated that during his meetings with officials in our country discussions dealt with bilateral relations and stressed the need to promote and bolster them in the interest of both fraternal countries.

Prime Minister Receives Eritrean Leader Afewerki

EA2512203591 Asmera Voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea in Tigrigna 1500 GMT 25 Dec 91

[Text] Yesterday morning, a high-level delegation led by Mr. Isaias Afewerki, secretary general of the Provisional Government of Eritrea, met and held talks with the Yemeni Prime Minister, Mr. Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, who congratulated the Eritrean people on their long awaited independence. The two then discussed bilateral relations at great lengths and affirmed that developing mutual cooperation would benefit the two peoples.

Foreign Minister Receives Afewerki

JN2412142791 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Foreign Minister brother Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani today received brother Isayas Afewerki, leader of the Provisional Government of Eritrea, and his delegation, who are currently paying an official visit to our country. During the meeting, they discussed the current situation in the African Horn region, as well as bilateral relations and means of promoting them.

The meeting was attended by Ahmad Dayfallah al-'Uzayb, under secretary at the Foreign Ministry for political affairs.

'Text' of Joint Statement Issued

JN2812151691 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] A joint statement was issued today at the end of a visit to our country by Isayas Afewerki, leader of the Provisional Government of Eritrea. The following is the text of the statement:

Brother Isayas Afewerki, leader of the Provisional Government of Eritrea, paid a visit to the Republic of Yemen from 23 to 27 December, accompanied by the Foreign Ministry secretary general, brother Muhammad Sa'id. Isayas Afewerki met separately with Presidential Council Chairman brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council Vice Chairman 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Prime Minister brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, and a number of other ministers and officials.

The two sides agreed to cooperate both politically and economically in regional and international fields. Emphasis was placed on the following points:

—Exerting joint efforts to bring about peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region.
—Economic, social, and educational cooperation to serve the interests of all the parties concerned.
—The Yemeni side stressed its readiness to exert every possible effort to reconstruct Eritrea, while the Eritrean side expressed its readiness to allow Yemeni investment and capital into Eritrea to serve the interests of all parties.
—The Republic of Yemen will open a legation in Asmera, and Eritrea will open a legation in Sanaa in order to facilitate contacts between the two sides.

The two sides expressed great satisfaction with this visit, which falls within the framework of brotherly contacts. They also voiced their satisfaction with its positive results.

Saddam Meets Industry Aides, Husayn Kamil Hasan

JN2912161791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1608 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Dec (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has met with ministers and officials from the industrial sector.

The meeting was attended by [former defense minister] Staff Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan, who used to supervise the industrial sector.

Oil Minister Addresses Symposium on Market

JN2812144591 Baghdad INA in English 1305 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 28, INA—Minister of Oil Usamah 'Abd-al- Razzaq al-Hiti expected that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) would collapse if it failed to strike a logical balance between supply and demand in the oil market.

In a special session held in Baghdad recently and attended by Iraqi oil specialists and technicians as well as experts, Mr al-Hiti said false information were being promoted concerning a change in the world demand for oil, environment and geopolitical dangers and warned that some international beneficiary companies were trying to include these information in their contracts with the Middle East oil producing countries in an attempt to blackmail them and realize certain dubious political goals.

The minister added that the OPEC members' rush into developing their oil fields simultaneously by dealing with international companies on basis of partnership had motivated the foreign companies to be more selective when granting facilities to the OPEC members on the pretext of economic recession.

Mr al-Hiti stressed that all this would serve these companies' attempts to dictate their monopolist conditions and set more oil concessions.

He called for developing oil planning, especially in field of observing the demand for energy at the international market and adopting policies of planning by substitution as well as by mathematical speculations.

He made it clear that Iraq had gained advanced technology in oblique drilling and that it sought to acquire the horizontal drilling techniques, adding that Iraqi figures on the rate of success of exploratory wells surpassed those given by world experts.

The oil minister urged all those working in the oil sector to develop Iraq's natural gas reserve and not to squander this national wealth in view of the increasing world demand, especially as the world aspired for the use of non-pollutant energy.

On the other hand, some participants in the session confirmed the information mentioned during the recent oil conference held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which said that Iraq possessed 10 percent of the world oil reserve.

During the past two years, Iraq had announced large oil finds, which international experts expected to push up Iraq's discovered and undiscovered oil reserve.

Meanwhile, international economic sources said the world had no alternative to cover its oil needs other than the Iraqi oil which had been denied access into world market under an American resolution of pure political motives.

The sources quoted an article by THE MIDDLE EAST SURVEY, a magazine specialised in oil affairs, as saying that preventing Iraq from exporting oil at this stage might satisfy certain political ambitions, but warned that this would not be in the interest of the world in the long run.

Talabani Ambush of DPK's Barzani Alleged

JN2812092091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0842 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Dec (INA)—BABIL says that Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK], was the target last week of an assassination attempt perpetrated by cliques affiliated with Jalal Talabani. Citing reliable sources, today's BABIL says: On the night of 17 and 18 December, the cliques set an armed ambush between the city of Salah al-Din and Sari Rash in Irbil to assassinate Mas'ud Barzani. The sources added that Barzani's fighters discovered the ambush and arrested the cliques, which are being interrogated.

The newspaper quoted these reliable sources as saying "that Jalal Talabani's cliques spread the rumor that the ambush was masterminded by the state. Barzani loyalists, however, are convinced that it was masterminded by Jalal Talabani. They have spoken of this."

The paper added: "Jalal Talabani's cliques have recently declared a state of voluntary mobilization in Shaqlawah and Irbil. Response from those who are not politically organized, however, was very weak."

The paper quoted reliable sources in the area as saying that Halabjah citizens demonstrated outside the commune's [preceding word in English] headquarters and raised slogans condemning subversive cliques, describing them as a band of thieves. The paper indicated that demonstrators also took to the streets of Chamchamal and Klar, chanting slogans condemning saboteurs and thieves, and branding them as enemies of the Kurdish people.

Kurdish-Government Talks Analyzed

JN2112205591 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 19 Dec 91 p 6

["Question and Answer" column in the Political Affairs section]

[Text] Why have the results of the dialogue with the Kurdistan Parties Front [KPF] not materialized, either

on the level of tangible results, or on the level of the statements which explain the general outlines of the dialogue?

This question was put to us by Fadil Karim Salih from Babil Governorate.

To answer this question we should go back to the history of the Kurdish cause, and to the official policies which accompanied it and which were characterized by short-sightedness and a lack of realism.

The first step toward a humanitarian, principled, and realistic stand came with the 17-30 July revolution, which produced the 11 March statement and the autonomy law for Kurdistan.

For a long time, however, the Kurdish issue has never been far from the influence of foreign policies, whether the policies of neighboring countries—particularly Iran, Turkey, or Syria under Hafiz al-Asad—or the policies of foreign countries, particularly Britain and the United States, while the Zionist entity has done its best to have some influence.

After the 17-30 July revolution, there was an increase in interference and attempts to stop the revolution from advancing and create obstacles in its path. These acts of interference were not motivated by a principled position and did not express the minimum level of concern for our Kurdish people. We view the issue only as a card being used to weaken Iraq. The evidence is that although the Kurds constitute part of the ethnic structure of some neighboring countries, like Iran, Turkey, and Syria, their national rights are not granted to them and their national character is not recognized by these countries.

It is regrettable that some Kurdish leaders, to a large extent, surrender to this fact and accept a role which is not only against Iraq's nationalism, but also against the Kurds themselves. Despite bitter experiences, some leaders do not want to learn their lesson.

The autonomy law in Iraq's Kurdistan was a great step along the path of national rights for our Kurdish people. But the abnormal situation that accompanied its application prevented its expected results. The leadership, however, did not view it as a final one that cannot be developed. Leader President Saddam Husayn referred to this point on several occasions.

The recent dialogue between the Iraqi Government and the KPF was based on that principle. It can be said that the dialogue has been positive ever since the first meeting, when the KPF delegation was headed by Jalal Talabani. In the second meeting, the KPF delegation was headed by Mas'ud Barzani. The dialogue went in the direction of interaction, and agreement was reached on the majority of points on the agenda of subsequent meetings.

Statements confirming what we have said were made by representatives of the Kurdish parties.

Jalal Talabani, however, started to make statements in the opposite direction. Then, he made his political trip which started in Ankara and ended in Washington.

Talabani's mission in the U.S. capital was very clear. He wanted to know the U.S. stance on the agreement with the Iraqi Government. The U.S. position was mixed. In the State Department, the response was that this is a domestic issue and therefore we have no opinion on it. Intelligence quarters, however, did not encourage such an agreement and considered it a source of strength for Iraq, a thing which the United States does not want.

Talabani understood the message and began to adjust his statements and acts to correspond to it. From there, and through the Voice of America, he criticized the Parties Law because it does not allow any party to have direct contact with foreign powers. That statement has a very clear meaning and message.

At the same time, armed groups affiliated with Jalal Talabani began to play a subversive role and to provide cover for groups of thieves, professional killers, and looters of the Kurds' bread.

The Democratic Party of Kurdistan under Mas'ud Barzani, on the other hand, pursued its positive position and resumed the dialogue. It did all that it could to solve the fabricated incidents, and worked to normalize the confused situation in Iraq's Kurdistan.

For all that, and despite the delay in making the results of the dialogue public, we can say that the meetings that were held achieved some understanding and common ground. The results will appear in the coming stage; they will promote the autonomy experience of our Kurdish people in the northern part of our beloved homeland, the homeland of the Arabs and Kurds.

From experience, our Kurdish people know that foreigners do not care about them, and that the Kurdish issue is being used only against Iraq's independence, progress, and stability.

Shoval: 'We Will Prevent' Palestinian State

TA2712202191 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Israeli Ambassador to Washington Zalman Shoval called on the Palestinians not to insist on the notion of splitting from the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. He warned that adhering to that concept would lead ultimately to the failure of the talks. Ambassador Shoval, who was speaking before noon today at Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center, added that Israel, in its political coordination with the United States, should make clear its idea for a possible and practical solution to the Palestinian problem following the interim phase. Our correspondent Eli Kahil attended Mr. Shoval's lecture and provided us with this report:

[Begin Shoval recording, in Hebrew] I would say that if, on the eve of the resumption of the talks on 7 January, perhaps in 10 days from today, the Palestinians do not understand that they must conduct the negotiations according to the predetermined rules, the chances of making progress will be rather slim. Nevertheless, I would not discount the possibility that they may yet realize that, and reach their own conclusions. I would even go as far as saying that we were not very far from an agreement, but that it was not reached because of misunderstandings and disagreements within the Palestinian delegation and, of course, because of their continuing adherence to the hope and strategy that the Americans will step in and solve their problem for them. I believe that on this issue and at this time, the Americans will not solve their problem for them.

I do not know whether you are aware that the leading motif in Palestinian propaganda is that the establishment of a Palestinian state should be the obvious outcome at the end of the process. In other words, they were kind enough to agree to an interim arrangement, whether it is called autonomy or any other name; they actually made a gesture toward the Americans, peace, and Israel, by temporarily forgoing something that should be, as it were, the obvious culmination of the process at the end of five years.

Israel is faced with an important and at times difficult task on this issue, because we advocate negotiations without preconditions, in which each side raises its own demands, and so on and so forth. Tactically, this is the right approach from the point of view of public relations. We will have to make it absolutely clear, however, that an independent and separate Palestinian state west of the Jordan River cannot, under any circumstances whatsoever, be the outcome of the process; that we will prevent such an outcome, if need be, even by force. When discussing that issue, it is very important to look at what is happening now or at what will be happening in the next few years and months. If all goes well, we will begin discussing the final and permanent status of the territories only three years from now, but, in the meantime, facts are being established in the field, both for better and for worse. [end recording]

[A related report by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik on Jerusalem Israel Television in Hebrew at 1805 GMT on 27 December adds: "Ambassador Shoval admitted that there is a deep gap between the Israeli and U.S. positions on the most basic issues. Moreover, Shoval said, unlike previous administrations, the current administration is not averse to a head-on confrontation with Israel. Shoval's conclusion is that Israel should neither despair nor dig in its heels." In a recorded passage, Shoval says: "In my opinion, the U.S. Administration does not have an accurate, detailed, and definitive plan of action regarding the future of Judaea and Samaria or the Golan Heights. The Americans have some broad outlines; certain issues are unacceptable to them. There is maneuvering room, however; they can be given some ideas and thoughts. We should try to coordinate positions with them. Such attempts are important, or else things will be more difficult."]

Autonomy Proposal When Talks Move From Corridor

TA2912094491 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Dec 91 p A1

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpts] The talks with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, which start next Tuesday in Washington, will immediately shift from the corridor to the negotiating room, Foreign Minister David Levi told a closed meeting last week. The Israeli team to the talks with the Jordanians and Palestinians has a detailed proposal on the issues and agenda for the discussions on the transfer of authority to self-government and intends to present a document on the matter when the first meeting opens inside the negotiating room.

Jerusalem believes that the Palestinians will come up with their own agenda and that the next round of talks—and possibly those that follow—will center on that issue and not on the meaning of autonomy. Jerusalem sources said that will permit Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to tell the extreme rightist parties, which threaten to bring down the government when the autonomy talks start, that the negotiations have not yet reached the practical stage.

In recent talks with U.S. Administration officials, it was made clear to Israel that the United States is encouraging the transfer of the negotiations to Europe immediately after the next round of talks in Washington ends. The view has grown among Palestinians that it will be preferable to move the talks outside the boundaries of the United States in permit senior PLO representatives to be present. [passage omitted]

During his visit to Kiev, Arye Levin, Israel's ambassador to Russia, was presented by the Ukrainian foreign minister with an official invitation for Foreign Minister Levi, who will go to Moscow in late January to head the Israeli team to the multilateral talks.

Foreign Ministry 'Discontent' at Staggered Talks

TA3012101091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 30 Dec 91 p A1

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Israel has asked the United States to postpone the next round of bilateral talks with Syria to 13 January—six days after the talks with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation begin in Washington next Tuesday [7 January]. On the same pretext—the desire to create as total a separation as possible between the three Arab delegations—Israel has asked that the talks with the Lebanese delegation begin a day later, on 8 January.

The U.S. Administration has not yet responded to the request, but it is believed in Jerusalem that, in view of the vehement opposition of the Syrians and Lebanese to this move, Israel will be asked to send all its teams to Washington simultaneously.

The initiative to again try to arrange the talks on a staggered basis, following the government decision on the eve of the first round of talks in Washington, came from the prime minister's bureau. Senior Foreign Ministry officials reacted to this initiative with surprise and discontent. According to them, after the previous round of talks with the three Arab delegations started simultaneously, it will be difficult to explain a repeated Israeli request for a staggered timetable. Speaking in a closed forum, Yosi Ben-Aharon, who heads the delegation to the talks with Syria, announced that he intends to shorten the next round of talks to two to three days and return to Israel immediately after that.

On Wednesday [1 January], the inner cabinet will discuss the recommendations presented by the negotiating teams and will issue instructions for the next round of talks. The ministers are supposed to instruct the delegates on the stand they are to present in Washington concerning the venue and timetable for the talks.

The inner cabinet is also expected to approve the autonomy offer to be presented to the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, assuming that the problem of the split between its two components is resolved. Yitzhaq Shamir has already determined that the plan will not be similar to principles laid down in the Camp David accords because, in his opinion, the numerous settlements set up over the last decade and their geographic expanse do not allow for an Army pullout from many Palestinian population centers and for the transfer of internal security powers to the self-government authorities.

The cosponsors of the political process have so far not issued invitations to the participants in the multilateral conference in Moscow. Jerusalem anticipates a Palestinian demand to appear as a separate delegation in this forum as well, mainly in the discussions of the committee dealing with the rehabilitation of the Palestinian refugees. Israel is demanding that a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation appear in this forum as well.

Envoy Promises Russia To Be Involved in Process

TA3012102491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir met with Russia's Ambassador Aleksandr Bovin this morning. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that the ambassador stated that Russia will be involved in the peace process in the Middle East and that he wishes success for the multilateral talks, scheduled to open in Moscow at the end of January. The prime minister said he hopes the bilateral talks will soon resume in our region. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 30 December broadcasts a related report noting that Bovin "promised that Russia will inherit the Soviet Union's role in the political process." The prime minister, on the other hand, "emphasized that Israel is responsible for the absorption and well-being of Russian immigrants."]

Minister Officially Resigns; Effective in 48 Hours

TA2912094891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan provides us no surprises this morning. A short while ago, he presented his letter of resignation to the cabinet secretary, after announcing his intention during the cabinet's weekly session. His resignation will become effective in 48 hours. Therefore, after officially resigning, and provided there are no changes, in 48 hours Eytan will no longer be a cabinet member.

Move Prompts Talk of Early Elections

TA2912202091 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan resigned from the cabinet today and his faction, Tzomet, resigned from the Knesset coalition. That narrowed the current government's base of support and cabinet ministers increasingly believe that early elections will be called.

There is palpable tension at the Prime Minister's Office prior to the final discussions on the new state budget, scheduled for this week, and on the issue of direct elections for prime minister. The prime minister's associates said that Shamir does not want to call early elections; they did not rule out the possibility, however, that he would indeed do so if he had no choice. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports:

[Passage omitted] The atmosphere at today's cabinet session, which was a very short one, was somewhat pensive. Even if the crucial hurdle of the state budget is successfully negotiated this week, the feeling at the session was that the possibility of a transitional preelection government was becoming more and more viable. Minister David Magen, from the Likud, said that there was a greater chance of elections being called before November. The longer the current Knesset session lasts, the higher the price for the taxpayer. Yuval Ne'eman

from the Tehiya said that the possibility of early elections was now higher, especially since Tehiya and Moledet would walk out of the government as soon as the peace talks reach discussions on Palestinian self-government or the possibility of territorial compromise. Other ministers said that the prime minister had already accepted what was coming. Here are some more views heard after the cabinet session.

[Begin recording] [Religious Affairs Minister Avner Sciaki] After all, we are only talking about another 10 months according to the law and as things stand now. So, if calling early elections means losing a maximum of three or four months, what will that add or detract? Therefore, I do not see the advantage of shortening the tenure of this government, and I do not believe that its days are numbered. It can still function despite everything.

[Transportation Minister Moshe Qatzav] We think it would be better if the government stayed in power until the end of its scheduled tenure. That is how things should be conducted in an orderly administration. Even if early elections are called, however, we shall not regret it. I believe that we have a pretty good standing among the public.

[Sukenik] Then I understand that early elections are a realistic possibility?

[Qatzav] Yes, that possibility is becoming more realistic than in the past.

[Interior Minister Arye Der'i] If we manage to overcome this, terrific. I find it hard to believe that they will manage to resolve these problems. It may indeed be the time for the prime minister to decide that he wants to go to the voter. [passage omitted]

Shamir on Importance of Territorial Integrity

TA2712204491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1805 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] The current coalition will go on doing its job, and at the moment there is no reason to move the elections forward, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir stated today. Replying to a question from our political correspondent, the prime minister said that he hopes for normal relations with Russia and the other republics, and believes that aliyah will continue and even grow. Yitzhaq Shamir was addressing a rally of the Shorashim Society in Tel Aviv, which was dedicated to Dr. Yisra'el Eldad, the ideologue of the pre-state Stern group underground. Gadi Sukenik reports:

[Begin recording] [Sukenik] The prime minister quoted Dr. Eldad's philosophy at length. Clearly, when it comes to Eretz Yisra'el and its integrity, Shamir and Eldad see eye to eye.

[Shamir] This is it; this is the goal: territorial integrity. It should not be bitten into or fragmented. This is an a priori principle; it is beyond any argument. You should not ask why; this is the be-all and end-all. Why this land is ours requires no explanation. From as far back as the pre-state days, I have not been able to abide such words. Is there any other nation in the world that argues about its motherland, its size and dimensions, about territories, territorial compromises, or anything similar? What may be forgiven when it comes from people in the diaspora cannot be forgiven when it comes from the people sitting in this land, from the people ruling it.

[Sukenik] Ten days before another round of the peace talks, Shamir was optimistic. There will be crises, he said, but the talks will continue. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 27 December adds that Prime Minister Shamir stated on the same occasion that "Israel expects the normalization of its relations with the PRC and noted that he attributes great importance to such a move."]

Right-Wing Demands on Settlement Allocations Met

TA3012054291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i has agreed to the demands of Tehiya and Moledet Knesset members to allot another 28 million shekels for the development of settlements in the territories. The agreement was reached late yesterday in Moda'i's meeting with Ge'ula Kohen and Rehav'am Ze'evi. Moda'i also agreed to Kohen's demand to increase the financial basket for new immigrants by 1,000 shekels a year per family. This will cost the Treasury an additional 50 million shekels.

Analysis of Settlement Growth, Development

TA2712150591 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Dec 91 p B2

[Report by Nadav Shragay]

[Text] Time is now the settlers' primary enemy. Although that phrase has worn thin through excessive use, that is precisely how the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza sees reality. At present, almost every step taken for Jewish construction and development in the territories is the direct outcome of the shadow of a looming political process and of the feeling that time is running short. In May 1989, only 900 housing units had been started for Jewish settlers. Today, 30 months later, about 12,000 housing units are in various stages of construction. That is growth of about 1,300 percent. Despite that astonishing data, the settlement leaders are behaving as if the devil was after them—"the devil of autonomy," in the words of one of them. They are acting on the fear that settlement and construction will be frozen.

Even now, the settlements are looking for ways to reduce their dependence on the Construction and Housing Ministry and on private construction companies. They are trying to manufacture houses in the settlements for

the settlements. The first harbinger was a small house-manufacturing plant in the settlement of Ma'ale Mikhmash in Binyamin District. The plant, which was founded by the Binyamin Regional Council, manufactures wooden houses. In Ma'ale Levona, the first 30 locally built houses are now being completed. The settlements of Nahli'el and Talmon have also purchased houses from the Ma'ale Mikhmash plant. Another attempt to accelerate Jewish building in the territories has just been made in 'Eli, where a couple of English workers took only two weeks to complete a UK-made model home. The building's walls are made of two layers of Styrofoam and three layers of concrete. A dense metal mesh surrounds the Styrofoam boards, and no heavy iron elements are used. These ostensibly minor achievements may be a landmark.

The depth of the change brought on by Ari'el Sharon's term in the Construction and Housing Ministry (two and a half years, so far) can be ascertained only after a thorough inspection of maps, charts, and statistics, and, naturally, after a direct meeting with the reality in the settlements. The following inventory is the first—albeit, somewhat telegraphic—attempt to sum up the Jewish presence in the territories.

—Population: Ten months before the election of the 13th Knesset, Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip are inhabited by 112,000 Jews. The Jewish building drive since Sharon took over the Construction and Housing Ministry will be understood in terms of population only in 1992 and 1993. By September 1992, 6,000 of the 12,000 housing units currently under construction will house some 27,000 persons. (The calculation is based on an average 4.5 persons per apartment.) With an extra 2,000 people resulting from natural reproduction, the total number of settlers will stand at some 141,000 by the end of the present government's term in office. This will represent a growth in Jewish population of about 40 percent in a 30-month period.

—The 200,000 target: Contrary to several settlement leaders' declarations, the data do not show that the population of the Jewish settlements will be 200,000 within a year from today. Only at the end of 1993 (two years from now) will a total of 9,000 new housing units be inhabited: 6,000 units built by the Construction and Housing Ministry and 3,000 built by private entrepreneurs without government assistance. Assuming that in 1993 the rate of apartment purchasing remains unchanged from 1991 and 1992 (almost 100 percent), some 40,000 new inhabitants will join the Jewish population in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza in 1993. Together with the forecasted natural reproduction of about 3,000, the total Jewish population of the territories will stand at about 185,000 by the end of 1993—a growth of about 85 percent in three and a half years.

—Main construction areas: Most of the new construction—about two-thirds—is being done in the major urban population centers within metropolitan Jerusalem and the Coastal Plain. Only about one-third is in remote areas. There is a high demand for housing in the two populated districts. There are several settlements in the remote areas in which houses are built for what is defined as reserve housing; these will be populated only in a few years. Examples of such settlements are 'Eli and Ma'ale Levona, in which not all the finished apartments have yet been purchased.

—New population breakdown according to districts: Despite the fact that only one-third of the construction is being done in the remote areas, approximately 46 percent of the new settlers in 1991 moved into the remote areas! One possible explanation is the fact that the settlements are small, mostly "ideological" settlements that "closed ranks" to absorb some of the new population in temporary buildings, such as campers, mobile homes, and prefabs. Most of them exceeded the maximum quotas they had set for themselves several years ago and, at the same time, changed the founders' visions of the settlements. Some 16,000 Jews moved to the territories in 1991. Of those, about 7,700 moved to remote settlements (within the boundaries of the local councils of Samaria and Mate Binyamin, Qiryat Arba', Hebron, the Hebron Hills, and the Gaza Coast). About 8,300 joined settlements such as Ma'ale Adumim, 'Ezyon Bloc, Efrat (all in the Jerusalem area), or Ari'el, Alfey Menashe, Oranit, and Elqana (on the peripheries of the Central District).

—Changes in the population distribution: There has been a relative rise in the number of Jews residing in remote settlements. The fact that a huge majority (over 45 percent) moved to remote locations has dramatically changed the population distribution. At the end of 1986, researcher Meron Benvenisti found that 85 percent of Jews in the territories lived in the metropolitan areas of the Central District and Jerusalem. Today, only 60 percent of them reside in those same areas. In absolute numbers, this means that 65,000 Jews today reside in the metropolitan areas of the Central District and Jerusalem and 47,000 live in remote settlements.

—The size of the settlements: Some 66,850 Jews today live in 13 large urban settlements in the territories, while 44,000 reside in 129 small settlements, most of them communal. The "remote" population of 47,000 resides in 113 settlements (an average of 415 people per settlement), whereas the "metropolitan area" population of 65,000 lives in 29 settlements (an average of 2,240 people per settlement). The largest settlement in the territories is Ma'ale Adumim with 15,750 inhabitants, followed by Ari'el with 11,150, Giv'at Ze'ev with 6,850, and Qiryat Arba' with 6,150 inhabitants. Some 40,000 people, or over one-third of the Jewish population of the territories, reside in those four locations.

—The proportion of Jews in the general population of the territories: Assuming there are 1 million Arabs in the West Bank today (a figure various official elements

agree upon), Jews constitute 11 percent of the total population in Judaea and Samaria. In the Gaza Strip, with 750,000 Arabs, Jews constitute only 0.5 percent of the general population.

—Forecast for the year 2005: According to an internal document drafted by the Civil Administration, 13 years from now there will be 1.424 million Arabs in the West Bank. There is no estimate about the concurrent growth of the Jewish population. Nevertheless, it is already clear that the number mentioned in the national master plan for immigrant absorption (250,000 Jews in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by 2010) does not square with the current rate of construction. The Jewish population in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza need only grow by an average of 10 percent every year until 2005 (in the three years between 1990 and 1993, the growth rate will be some 85 percent), for the number of Jews in the West Bank to total 500,000.

This estimated growth rate is compatible with the Housing and Construction Ministry's multiyear plan to build 106,000 houses in Judaea and Samaria in an area exceeding 90,000 dunams, at a cost of some $14 billion. This plan was drafted by the Planning and Construction Administration in Judaea and Samaria, which is headed by Dan Stav, an architect and urban designer by profession, who used to be the head of the Infrastructure and Settlement Planning Department in the National Security Unit back in the days when Ari'el Sharon was defense minister. Stav's plan includes 110 sites, almost all of them involving the expansion of existing settlements. Some 500,000 Jews by the year 2005, a theoretical figure at the moment, would make Jews approximately one-third of the general population of the West Bank.

—Roads: The accelerated paving of primary and secondary roads throughout the West Bank is one of the main tools for attracting Jews to those remote areas. A road bypassing Ra's Karkar has been paved near Talmon and another road has been paved connecting Talmon, Talmon Bet, and Nahli'el. A new road has been paved leading to 'Eli, and a section of the new Jerusalem-Gush 'Ezyon road has already been opened to traffic. The picture is similar in other regions. On more than one occasion a road has been planned on paper for military purposes, while the real purpose would be to expand the infrastructure of civilian settlements. That is one way of bypassing the prolonged approval process required for civilian infrastructure.

—Mortgages and benefits: According to calculations made by Knesset Members Hayim Oron of MAPAM [United Workers Party] and Dedi Zucker of the Citizens Rights Movement, the average mortgage granted to eligible applicants in the territories in fiscal 1990-1991 was 50 percent higher than the average mortgage granted in development areas (as defined by the government) and 76 percent higher than the average mortgage granted to eligible applicants in the center of the country. According to Oron and Zucker, the average mortgage was 84,500 shekels in the territories, 56,500 in development areas, and 48,000 in the center of the country. The calculations of the Housing and Construction Ministry are slightly different, but explain some of the findings. The ministry claims that the size of the mortgage granted to eligible applicants is determined by the distance of the house from the center of the country. Another benefit devised by the ministry is that contractors who build condominiums in the territories do not have to participate in the development costs. This means a subsidy of 17,000 shekels for every four-room apartment.

—Land: Due to a feeling of urgency, tens of thousands of dunams are currently in various stages of expropriation before being declared state land. A continuous strip of land between Dolev, Halamish, and 'Ateret was declared state land a few months ago. The same applies to an area very close to Dolev, at the site where the murderers of Ya'ir Mendelson lay in ambush. According to data released by Palestinian organizations, 70,000 dunams were expropriated in one month alone in mid-1991 in order to expand roads or settlements. What follows is a partial list: 2,500 dunams in Dayr Abu-Mash'al in the Ramallah District; 10,000 dunams in Luban al-Sharqiyah in the Nabulus District; 880 dunams in Zawiyah in the Nabulus District; 1,000 dunams in Masu'a [name as published] in the Hebron District; 1,500 dunams in 'Abud in the Ramallah District; 4,500 dunams in Rafat in the Ramallah District; 1,400 dunams in Artas in the Bethlehem District, which will apparently be used to expand Efrat, the urban center in Gush 'Ezyon. Some of the 8,000 dunams that have been declared state land near the villages of al-Sawiyah and Qaryut will be used to expand the settlement of 'Eli. At the end of this process, some 40 percent of the land in the West Bank will have been declared state land. In any case, that is the plan. The policy of Likud governments has been not to establish Jewish settlements on private land. The process of declaration of state land has been accelerated in anticipation of the autonomy talks. Israel intends to argue for a different status for those lands within the framework of autonomy.

—New settlements: Rehelim, currently a tent encampment, is a fait accompli. Pli'a Albek, an official with the Justice Ministry, has already located an appropriate 200-dunam plot of land for that settlement, and in due course the Defense Ministry and the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza will issue an official statement to that effect. In the pipeline are another 11 settlements whose establishment was approved years ago, particularly by the ministerial committee operating in the early 1980's that was headed by Professor Yuval Ne'eman of Tehiya. Amana, Gush Emunim's settlement organization, has already put together the nuclei of settlers who will

move there. Ze'ev Hever, Amana's director general, recently wrote in an article on this issue: "To those colleagues who suggest moving 10 to 12 nuclei of settlers to the sites on the same day, I say that would not be the right thing to do at the moment. The result would be a brutal evacuation to demonstrate to the whole world that this government opposes settlement.... We should fight the government in whatever way we can, on condition that the result is success. We cannot afford failure." As part of this strategy, the nuclei of settlers for Har Manoah near Qiryat Arba' and for Ginat in Samaria have been given top priority.

Iranian Vice President Arrives in Amman

LD3012074791 Tehran IRNA in English 0640 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Beirut, Dec. 30, IRNA—Iranian Vice-President for Parliamentary Affairs 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani arrived in the Jordanian capital of Amman Sunday night on a four-day visit.

He is to deliver a message from President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani of Iran to King Husayn of Jordan.

Earlier this month President Rafsanjani met with King Husayn during the Dakar Islamic summit and agreed to upgrade bilateral relations.

Speaking before leaving Beirut for Amman at the end of a five-day visit, Mohajerani described his visit as "fruitful" and said expansion of Tehran-Beirut relations was the core of his talks with Lebanese President 'Ilyas al-Hirawi, Prime Minister 'Umar Karami and Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament Husayn al-Husayni.

Mohajerani said resistance of the Lebanese people against Israel was also raised in his talks with the Lebanese officials.

The Iranian official arrived in Beirut December 25 from Syria to attend the international conference for supporting the Islamic revolution of the Palestinian people, held last week.

Government Recognizes CIS Republics, Georgia

JN2812192291 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] In a session chaired by Prime Minister Zayd Bin-Shakir this evening, the cabinet decided to recognize the Russian Federation, to establish diplomatic relations with it at the ambassadorial level, and to consider Jordan's embassy in Moscow to be an embassy in the Russian Federation. The cabinet also recognized the independence of the Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgizia, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, which joined the Russian Federation in forming the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. The cabinet also decided to recognize the independence of the Georgian republic.

Following the cabinet session, Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir said the decision to recognize and establish diplomatic relations at the embassy level with the Russian Federation gives him hope for relations of friendship and cooperation between Jordan and Russia in various fields, with a view toward serving mutual interests and strengthening the bonds between their two peoples. He expressed satisfaction with Russia's declared pledge to respect the international obligations and agreements that bound the predecessor state—the USSR.

In the name of the Jordanian Government and people, Dr. Abu-Jabir congratulated the governments and peoples of the CIS on their independence. He said our embassy in Moscow will be assigned the task of holding contacts to establish and organize our relations with these states. The foreign minister hoped the independence of the republics noted above and the end of the Cold War will mark a new stage during which international relations will be built on firm bases of justice, legitimacy, commitment to international law, and respect for people's rights to self-determination. He also expressed hope the Russian Federation will play a constructive role on the international scene—a role reflecting the political and moral weight of Russia and one that will help to enhance world peace and security. From this premise, said Dr. Abu-Jabir, we are satisfied with the Russian leadership's declaration that it is determined to continue to sponsor the Middle East peace process.

Russian Envoy on Moscow Peace Talks, Embassy

JN2812084591 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 28 Dec 91 pp 1, 27

[By Marwan Sudah]

[Excerpts] Amman—Soviet ambassador in Amman Yuriy Stepanovich Gryadunov has said that the former embassy of the Soviet Union in Jordan lowered the Soviet flag at 1700 last Thursday in attendance of the embassy staff.

In a statement to AL-RA'Y, he added that the embassy has hoisted the flag of the Russian Federation, which is the new name of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

He further said: As of today, the former embassy of the Soviet Union will assume the duties of the embassy of the Russian Federation, and I will be the ambassador of the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on Russia's preparations for hosting the multilateral negotiations in Moscow, he stressed that the third preliminary meeting for the parties taking part in the conference will be held in Moscow, and the preparations by the Russian capital are under way. The Russian Federation will continue to be a sponsor of the peace conference alongside the United States.

He added that the Russian leadership had discussed with Secretary of State James Baker during his recent visit to the soviet republics ways of solving the Middle East problem and hosting the peace conference in Moscow. Baker also discussed these issues with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and his Foreign Minister Kozyrev. He added: I stress that Russia will do all it can to entrench the pillars of peace in the region, and that, in this regard, the Russian political leadership highly appreciates the Jordanian position which seeks peace.

He thanked His Majesty King Husayn for the warm sentiments included in his cables to the presidents of the independent republics in which he expressed his sincere

feelings toward the soviet peoples. Concluding, the ambassador wished progress and prosperity for the Jordanian people.

New U.S. Aggression on Iraq Viewed

JN2512102291 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 25 Dec 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Why Threatening To Launch a New Aggression Against Iraq"]

[Text] THE NEW YORK TIMES recently has reported that there are U.S. and allied Western preparations for delivering a military strike against Iraq and toppling its regime. This is truly strange and objectionable.

The U.S. paper admits that the U.S. Administration and its allies are preparing for military action against Iraq. At the same time, they are arming, training, and inciting Iraqi opposition against the Iraqi leadership.

If what THE NEW YORK TIMES says is true, then the region could witness new catastrophes and disasters at the hands of America and its NATO allies.

This is practically and objectively opposed to the alleged U.S. concern for restoring peace, security, and stability in the region. It also contradicts international legitimacy and human rights.

If the Iraqi takeover of Kuwait provided a pretext for the United States and its allies to launch the 30-state aggression against Iraq, then what is the pretext that can be used now to launch a new aggression, especially since Iraq has implemented all Security Council resolutions despite the unjust economic and political siege imposed upon it.

What the United States is contemplating and preparing for, as reported by THE NEW YORK TIMES, is a flagrant interference in the affairs of this Arab country and a violation of international legitimacy and the right of nations to self-determination.

Nations alone choose their leadership and political system; no other party in the world has the right to determine their present and future.

We believe that the U.S. Administration and its allies should stop their premeditated aggressive intentions against Iraq and brush aside any adventurous attempt that might destroy hopes of achieving peace and stability in the region.

We also believe that the disasters and destruction Iraq witnessed as a result of the 30-state aggression at the hands of the United States and its allies will never be forgotten by the peoples of the region.

If there really are premeditated U.S. intentions against Iraq, then this will entail a crazy, stupid adventure whose destructive effects might touch the entire region. We do not think that Iraq will sit idly while being subjected to aggression. Nor do we think that the Arab nation will remain silent once again on the destruction of Iraq and the annihilation of its people.

Bulgarian Envoy Meets Bin-Shakir, Others

JN2812131191 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir received at his office today the Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Stoyan Ganev. Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir attended. A review was made at the meeting of the relations existing between Jordan and Bulgaria and ways to promote them, particularly in the economic and trade fields. The two sides also discussed the latest developments in the Middle East issue and the peace efforts currently taking place with the aim of achieving just and durable peace in the Middle East.

The Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad al-Lawzi also met today with the visiting Bulgarian delegation. Mr. al-Lawzi briefed Mr. Ganev on the situation in Jordan in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis as well as the Palestinian question. On his part, the Bulgarian minister paid tribute to Jordan's contribution under the leadership of his majesty the king towards achieving peace in the region. He asserted his country's support for implementing UN Security Council Resolutions, and said Jewish settlements in the occupied territories are a stumbling block to peace.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat also received the visiting Bulgarian minister and the accompanying delegation. Discussions dealt with the democratization process in Jordan and means to bolster bilateral cooperation between the two countries. Mr. Ganev explained that his delegation's mission is to offer Bulgaria as a venue for the third phase of Middle East peace talks in case they do not convene in Moscow.

Speaks With Media, Departs

JN2912132791 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] The Bulgarian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Stoyan Ganev, has said his country has a genuine desire to strengthen its relations with Jordan on all levels. He also praised the relations and the rational and realistic policy chartered by Jordan towards various issues of the region.

At a joint press conference with the Jordanian foreign minister, Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, prior to his departure from Amman today at the end of a four-day visit, Mr. Ganev said he held expanded talks with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan and senior Jordanian officials on the peace process in the region and Bulgaria's role in giving momentum to the peace process. The talks also dealt with bilateral relations.

The Bulgarian minister said he conveyed a message to His Majesty King Husayn from the president of Bulgaria containing an invitation for his majesty to visit Bulgaria.

Mr. Ganev said his country supports Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue. He added that his government has notified the parties concerned and the two cosponsors of the Middle East peace conference of its offer to host the peace talks [illegible] subsequent phase.

He said he was optimistic the peace process would succeed because it reflects the genuine desire of the peoples of the region.

Mr. Ganev said the continued construction of the Israeli settlements is an obstacle to peace in the region.

On his part, Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir said at the press conference that the two sides signed this morning a cooperation agreement, adding that the two countries intend to draw up a comprehensive agreement on cooperation in all fields, and particularly the economic field. He commanded Bulgaria for its support of Jordan's efforts to establish just, durable, and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of the Resolutions 242 and 338, which stipulate Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, including Arab Jerusalem, and the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination.

Dr. Abu-Jabir said Bulgaria has offered during the talks to host the bilateral and multilateral talks on Middle East peace and Jordan has welcomed the offer. He added that Jordan will consult with the Palestinians on the matter, adding that he believed the Palestinians would welcome the offer because of the good relations they have with Bulgaria.

The foreign minister said the world is witnessing drastic changes on the regional and international levels in the aftermath of the collapse of Communism and the dismantling of the Soviet Union.

Dr. Abu-Jabir added that Jordan views Bulgaria as an element of stability in the region, saying that it could constitute a bridge between the Arab world and the newly formed Soviet republics.

Paper Urges ACC Revival, Expansion

JN2812100491 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 28 Dec 91 p 30

["Highlights" column by Dr. Fahd al-Fanik: "Is it Possible to Revive the Arab Cooperation Council?"]

[Text] The Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] was born in Baghdad on 16 February 1989 to serve as a link among the countries of the Arab heartland. It then comprised 40 percent of the Arab nation's population, and played an important role in filling the vacuum created by the launching of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union. A year and a half after it came into being, the ACC gained immense ground and became a political force to be reckoned with, especially since it was the only Arab grouping open to other Arab countries such as Syria and Sudan.

However, the esteemed ACC was one of the first casualties of the Gulf crisis. This was because of Egypt's decision to adopt a different stand, to turn against Iraq, and to condemn it instead of making mediation efforts and attempting to impose an Arab solution that could have forestalled foreign intervention and the ensuing catastrophe.

Since the middle of 1990, the ACC has been frozen and suspended. This state of affairs will continue until further notice. However, none of its four members, namely, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, and Jordan, has thus far either pronounced it dead or declared its withdrawal from the Council.

There is no doubt that new Arab developments and circumstances require certain changes be made within the ACC before it can be revived and reactivated. Foremost among the necessary changes is accepting Syria and Sudan as ACC members, especially since they are two Arab states situated within the Arab heartland—states that previously expressed a desire to join the ACC. However, the circumstances at the time did not allow this to happen. Now, their joining the ACC has become possible after objections and conditions have been removed and after the circumstances have changed.

Furthermore, reviving the ACC has now become a pan-Arab necessity dictated by the need to forestall a permanent fragmentation and division within the Arab homeland. Such a move is also dictated by the need to strengthen the Arab League. If such an eventuality were to materialize, the Arab League would then bring together councils rather than 21 states, which are finding it hard to agree on any resolution.

Furthermore, reviving the ACC is the only way to contain the effects of the Gulf crisis and end its repercussions in Arab lands, especially with regard to ending the unfair blockade which the United States continues to impose on the Iraqi people, and also with regard to eliminating the dangers which jeopardize Iraq's territorial integrity and safety, and the territorial ambitions of neighboring countries in the east and north as well.

Against the backdrop of the Gulf crisis and Egypt's dissension, freezing the ACC might have been considered inevitable. However, this suspension of its activities has exhausted its purposes. It is no longer sufficient to say that none of the ACC members has thus far abandoned the ACC or withdrawn from it. Indeed, it is high time to revive it so that it can play an effective role on the Arab scene, after expanding it to include Syria and Sudan, particularly after the circumstances have become propitious for such expansion. If this expansion were to materialize, the ACC would then comprise 60 percent of the Arab nation's population. This would also be a big

step along the path of attaining Arab unity through economic and organizational approaches.

Crown Prince on Amman's Zionism Resolution Stand

JN2512100391 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Dec 91 pp 1, 3

["Special from Washington"]

[Text] Jordan's position towards the repeal of the U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism was governed by the actual Israeli policies and actions against the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan has said.

"The facts on the ground point to continuous oppression of Palestinians in respect of personal and political rights, the allocation of resources, and the fundamental question of identity," the Crown Prince said in a statement distributed among American congressmen by the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington.

The Crown Prince also referred to Israel's continued settlement activities in the occupied territories and the occupation power's seizure of Arab lands and said: "These measures, accompanied by a fresh crackdown on Palestinians in the occupied territories, violate both international law and the democratic principle of non-discrimination."

"For Jordan's part, therefore, the status of Zionism as a political or cultural philosophy is not at issue; the policies of the state of Israel are," said the Crown Prince.

Jordan voted against the repeal of the resolution last week.

Following is the full text of the Crown Prince's statement:

There has been much comment recently on the repeal of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 3379, equating Zionism with racism. Before considering Jordan's position on this subject, it is worth pointing out that the motion to repeal Resolution 3379 came in the context of ongoing peace negotiations. It is the sincere hope of Jordan that all parties to the peace process continue down the long and difficult path to peace in the spirit of open exchange and communication. If the process is ultimately to lead to the establishment of lasting and equitable conditions of true peace in the region, we believe that this spirit must at all costs be maintained.

But at this stage of the process, when mutual confidence is low, measures designed to break down psychological barriers between the sides are crucial. The sixth summit of the Islamic Conference Organisation at Dakar voted to adopt such a confidence-building measure. Voting for the repeal of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 3379 could have been another such measure. But is the participation of both parties not central to the concept of negotiations?

The question relevant to the survival of the Palestinian people, and therefore the Arab states negotiating with Israel, is not whether Zionism is a racist philosophy, but whether Israel as a state exercises policies based on racial or religious discrimination. The facts on the ground point to continuous oppression of Palestinians in respect of personal and political rights, the allocation of resources, and the fundamental question of identity. Israeli construction of settlements in the occupied territories continues unabated, alongside the unending confiscation of land.

These measures, accompanied by a fresh crackdown on Palestinians in the occupied territories, violate both international law and the democratic principle of non-discrimination. For Jordan's part, therefore, the status of Zionism as a political or cultural philosophy is not at issue; the policies of the state of Israel are.

Jordan believes in the need for joint answer to the challenges of the region, answers based on true peace-making. Jean Monnet, the founding father of European integration, contrasted two models of negotiations. In a conventional model, the sides face each other across the negotiating table. But in a true peace-making process, all parties are on the same side facing together their common challenge on the other side of the table. In the context of ongoing substantive peace negotiations, an end to the Israeli policies self-avowedly based on criteria of race and religion would greatly ease in transition from the conventional, unproductive, model of negotiation, to a true peace-making process.

Labor Minister Denies Deportation of 25 Egyptians

JN2712143191 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 27 Dec 91 p 1

[By Mamduh Hawamidah]

[Excerpt] Labor Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has said that the Jordanian Government will initiate contacts with the Egyptian Government next week to organize the entry of Egyptians into Jordan's labor market.

In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y, the labor minister denied what was published by the Egyptian newspaper AL-AHRAM on Wednesday [25 December] regarding the deportation of 25 Egyptian workers from the Kingdom.

The labor minister noted that the Ministry of Labor, the only official organ responsible for monitoring foreign workers, has not carried out any collective deportation of workers, Egyptian or otherwise.

He added that there are 162,000 Egyptian workers in the Kingdom, of which only 10,000 have valid working permits. [passage omitted]

Bomb Casualties at 80; 2d Bomb Defused

NC3012094991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] [Announcer] AFP has quoted ambulance service sources as saying that 13 people were killed and 30 others were wounded in the explosion of a booby-trapped Mercedes. It added that the removal of debris is continuing at the site of the explosion in al-Ma'mun Street near the vegetable market in al-Bastah district.

Major General 'Isam Abu-Zaki and Al-Fadl Shalaq, chairman of the Development and Reconstruction Council, inspected the site of the explosion.

For further details, let us listen to a report from our news desk:

[Unidentified correspondent] Hello George, I am talking to you from the site of the explosion. According to preliminary reports, it is likely that the booby-trapped car was a Mercedes rigged with 100 kg of explosives. A military expert who arrived on the scene of the blast has told us that the explosion caused a crater 2.05 by 2 meters and 1 meter deep. Maj. Gen. Muhammad Qubrusli, Security Forces director general, and Maj. Gen. 'Isam Abu-Zaki, commander of the Judicial Military Police, are inspecting the site of the explosion.

As we have said, preliminary reports state that the booby-trapped car was a Mercedes. Additionally, we have learned that one building was burned when a fuel oil storage tank in its basement caught fire. A school building also was damaged.

New information coming in now indicates that the casualties are 80, either killed or wounded. It is thought probable that 11 have died. It should be noted that there also are dead bodies lying under the debris in a butcher's shop in the Abu-al-Sa'ud Building in front of which the explosion occurred.

[Announcer] We have been listening to a live report by our correspondent. [Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 0921 GMT on 30 December reports: A short time ago, a military sapper dismantled a battery-operated explosive device that had been set to go off near a bank in Juniyah.]

Shafiq al-Wazzan Slightly Injured

NC3012105291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Medical and hospital sources say 13 died in the massive explosion in Fathallah Street near a busy vegetable market in al-Bastah at around 0940 today. The wounded are now put at approximately 100.

According to preliminary reports, the explosion was caused by a large explosive charge which was placed in a Mercedes. AFP estimated the charge to have been around 30 kg. Security sources said the force was the same as detonating 100 kg of TNT.

The military expert who inspected the site reported that the blast left a crater 1 meter deep and 2.05 m long. Our correspondent has noted that another car, a Honda Accord, was split in two, indicating that it might have been the booby-trapped vehicle.

Former Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan, who was driving near the area on his way to the Islamic Council headquarters in al-Ma'mun Street, sustained slight injuries which were treated on the spot. Al-Wazzan was then taken home. His escort, Kamal al-Wazzan, was taken to al-Maqasid Hospital. The former prime minister's bulletproof car saved him from more serious injury. Prime Minister 'Umar Karami telephoned al-Wazzan to tell him he was glad he was safe.

Al-Khatib: Bomber Must Hang

NC3012113191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Remarks by Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib at the site of today's Beirut explosion, followed by answers to questions by unidentified reporters—recorded]

[Text] All words of denunciation and disgust have become futile, even contemptible. We must promise you this: When the perpetrator, the hideousness and ugliness of whose crime is indescribable, is arrested, he must be hanged here, in this place. I do not know when we will seize him, when he will be arrested. Nevertheless, I promise you that he will be hanged on this spot. This is my first comment.

[Unidentified Correspondent in English] Who put this morning's car bomb here?

[Al-Khatib in English] I cannot tell now. It is very complicated but we have to start from now, from now on.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, [words indistinct] (?which targeted) the American University recently, responsible for this hideous massacre?

[Al-Khatib] I am not ruling out any possibility. I know that the criminal whose hand struck this area, these people, this innocent crowd, is not a human being. He can be ascribed every ugly quality. His objective is to undermine your steadfastness, your peace, the Lebanese peace, the Lebanese security plan, and the people's dignity and safety. We must all remain steadfast and adhere more strongly to our rights, sovereignty, and dignity. The criminal must be hanged in this place.

[Question and answer indistinct]

[Question indistinct]

[Al-Khatib in English] We have to start our investigation and after that we can tell. [words indistinct] We have to start from this point and after that I can tell you everything.

Karami: Peace March To Continue

NC3012124791 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Remarks by Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, commenting on today's explosion in Beirut; place not given—recorded]

[Text] Today we received the regrettable news of an explosion in a densely populated, residential area. It seems that killing is destined for us. Conspirators always target security in Lebanon, to stop the peace march. We have always expected such matters because we know that there are several quarters with links abroad, still working to disrupt Lebanon and stop the country from becoming stable and secure. This march will continue regardless of the sacrifices. Security agencies are working day and night under the most difficult circumstances. They uncovered the huge, regrettable, and complicated incident at the American University of Beirut. I consider today's incident to serve the same objective, part of the same scheme. We are naturally sorry for the victims and the wounded. We will submit the matter to cabinet this afternoon because the area in question is popular and the state must help the wounded and those harmed. I wish mercy for the victims and a speedy recovery for the wounded. The march will continue, God willing.

Kidnappers Want German Assurances on Release

NC2812122591 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1205 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The newspaper AL-HAYAH has cited sources intimate with the current mediation efforts to end the issue of the two German hostages as saying that resuming mediation between Tehran and Damascus, via Beirut, hinges primarily on a development in the German Government's position. The sources added that Giandomenico Picco, the UN secretary general's envoy, might return to the region in the beginning of the new year and noted that the kidnappers wish to close the hostage file provided they obtain German assurances guaranteed by Syria and Iran. The sources added that the kidnappers do not accept promises that do not specify a timetable for the release of the Hammadi brothers.

Syria, Iran Said Trying To 'Intercede'

NC2812125191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1238 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] According to information received by our radio, Syria and Iran are trying to intercede with Bonn to find an acceptable legal loophole for the Hammadi brothers.

Iran's Mohajerani Contacts Hammadis

NC2812100291 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran media sources have reported that Iranian official 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani, who is visiting Beirut, has contacted the Hammadi family and urged them to expedite the release of the two German hostages so that they will be free before the end of the year in accordance with promises Tehran previously made to Bonn.

The sources added that the final episodes of the hostage issue will be over before the end of the year and the expiration of UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar's term.

Mohajerani Meets al-Musawi, Birri, Others

LD2812172491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] At a meeting with our country's vice president in Beirut yesterday, Lebanese religious and political personalities stressed the expansion of anti-Zionist struggles.

According to a Central News Unit report from Beirut, Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, secretary general of the Lebanese Hizballah; members of the Central Council of Hizballah; Nabih Birri, head of the Lebanese Amal Movement; and Shaykh Muhammad Shams al-Din, vice president of the Higher Shiite Assembly of Lebanon, met separately with Mr. Mohajerani, the president's deputy for legal and parliamentary affairs, who is visiting Beirut to take part in the second conference on support for the Islamic revolution of the Palestine people. They submitted reports on the situation in Lebanon and the continuation of the Zionist regime's aggression against the southern part of that country. They stressed the need to struggle against that regime and expressed thanks to the Islamic Republic of Iran as the sole true supporter of the Muslim people of Palestine.

Our country's vice president, stressing the Islamic Republic of Iran's support for the struggles of the Muslim people of Palestine, described the unity of Muslims as imperative.

Denies Visit Linked to Hostages

NC2912070891 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] The Islamic Republic's delegation, led by 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani, Iranian vice president for legal and parliamentary affairs, met with Prime Minister 'Umar Karami yesterday in Tripoli. Homaydun 'Alizadeh, Iranian charge d'affaires in Lebanon, also attended the meeting.

Karami said they exchanged views on all issues connected with Lebanon's concern for safeguarding the country's sovereignty and independence. He added: We discussed all matters related to the Lebanese territories' liberation.

Mohajerani said the meeting was held in a good atmosphere. He denied his visit is connected with the hostage issue.

Earlier yesterday Mohajerani received 'Abbas al-Musawi, Hizballah secretary general; and Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council. Shams-al-Din said: It is natural for us to visit the Islamic Republic's embassy and discuss matters of mutual concern, particularly general Islamic and regional concerns. The most qualified party with which to discuss such issues is the Islamic Republic, which has regional and Islamic influence.

The Islamic Republic's vice president also received Minister Nabih Birri, leader of the Amal Movement, who stated after the meeting that it is natural during a meeting of brothers to discuss issues of mutual interest, particularly Lebanese affairs. He said: Naturally, we reviewed regional and international issues. Our views were similar regarding the Islamic Republic's role.

Says U.S., Israel Not Cooperating

LD2912223291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Mr. Mohajerani, vice president for legal and parliamentary affairs, and the delegation accompanying him left Beirut for the Jordanian capital Amman on Sunday night. Mr. 'Abdallah Amin, Lebanese secretary of state, saw him off. The Central News Unit reports from Beirut:

[Unidentified correspondent] [passage omitted] In an interview before his departure from Beirut Airport, Mr. Mohajerani described the objectives of the trip to Lebanon by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran as participation in the third conference on support for the Islamic uprising of Palestine and talks with officials in Lebanon. He added: During this visit we met with the president, parliamentary speaker, and prime minister of Lebanon, as well as several clergymen and heads of Islamic and nationalist Lebanese and Palestinian parties. The essential axes of these meetings were the expansion of bilateral relations between Iran and Lebanon and support for the Islamic uprising of Palestine and the anti-Zionist struggles of the people of Lebanon.

He added: The struggle against the occupying Israeli regime is the right of all the people and the government of Lebanon. We continue to support the trend of anti-Zionist resistance.

In reply to a journalist's question about the situation of the hostages, Mr. Mohajerani said: As everyone knows, America and Israel, who are on one side of the hostage saga, are not coming forward with the necessary cooperation in this connection. Therefore, Iranian, Lebanese, and Palestinian hostages continue to be held in captivity by the Zionist regime.

It is worth noting that during this five-day trip members of the support committee for the Islamic revolution of Palestine accompanied Mr. Mohajerani.

Shammas: U.S. To Intervene in Peace Talks

NC2912091691 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Suhayl Shammas, secretary general of the Foreign Ministry and head of the Lebanese delegation to the Washington talks, has stated that as long as the talks are continuing, this means that matters are proceeding according to plan and that the United States will intervene at the appropriate time to promote these talks.

Resistance: Lahd Position Destroyed, All Killed

NC3012062991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The Islamic Resistance has announced that one of its groups blew up a Lahd militia position in Rshaf last night. A statement issued by the resistance said that the position was destroyed and all the personnel manning it were killed.

President al-Hirawi 'Felt Indisposed' Saturday

NC3012101691 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The presidency's Media Affairs Office has issued the following statement:

President al-Hirawi felt indisposed on Saturday and had to cancel his official appointments. He regrets that he will not be able to receive well-wishers on the occasion of Evacuation Day and the new year.

Drugs Bound For U.S., Netherlands Seized

NC3012064191 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] The internal security forces yesterday afternoon seized the largest quantity of drugs in Lebanon's history estimated at approximately 600 kgs of hashish and 20 kg of heroin. The drugs were prepared for smuggling by sea to the Netherlands and the United States.

The operation took place at 1530 yesterday when a judicial force led by Brigadier General 'Isam Abu Zaki raided the headquarters of an international smuggling gang that has been under surveillance for 15 days. The force attacked a van in the al-Karantina area and fired at the driver, wounding him. He had been transporting approximately 600 kgs of hashish and 20 kgs of heroin hidden in barrels. The drugs were seized and the case has been referred to a military court. Military Prosecutor Khalid Hammud received the drugs and the defendant and began interrogation.

SAIRI Leader Deems Visit 'Successful'

JN2712174591 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Damascus, 27 Dec (SANA)—Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], left Damascus this afternoon after a visit during which he was received by President Hafiz al-Asad.

He was seen off at Damascus' international airport by comrade Dr. Tawfiq Salihah, Ba'th Party Regional Command member. In a predeparture statement to a SANA correspondent, al-Hakim stressed that his visit to Damascus was successful.

He added: We have a plan to save the Iraqi people, and we discussed this with officials in Syria who showed complete understanding of this plan.

Regarding coordination among Iraqi opposition factions, al-Hakim said: The Iraqi opposition parties discussed and approved the plan in general and a committee will be set up to prepare for a conference.

He expressed hope that this committee will carry out its duty, pointing out that there are a number of options to implement the plan and save the Iraqi people.

Al-Hakim added: We will move within the international arena, including the United Nations and the Security Council, to draw up a plan to extend direct relief aid to the Iraqi people and completely isolate the regime from this process.

Concluding, he said: It is the Iraqi regime that is besieging the people, and the people must be relieved.

President Hafiz al-Asad received a cable from SAIRI leader Ayatollah Baqir al-Hakim, who left Damascus today. The cable says: Upon leaving your country, I thank you very much for the hospitality we were accorded and for your cooperation to serve the causes of the Muslims and the oppressed Iraqi people. Syria is used to adopting such steadfast positions. We beseech Almighty God to grant you good health and the Syrian people progress and prosperity.

Former Soviet Republics Recognized

JN2812170591 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Statement issued by the Syrian Foreign Ministry in Damascus—date not given]

[Text] Proceeding from its traditional ties of friendship with the republics forming the former Soviet Union; out of its desire to maintain and promote these relations to serve the mutual interests of Syria and these new independent republics; and after becoming cognizant of the Alma-Ata Declaration of 21 December 1991, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic announces its recognition of each of the republics of the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and the Ukraine.

It also announces its decision to establish diplomatic and consular relations with all of these independent states on the basis of mutual respect and joint benefit and in order to support the issue of a just and comprehensive peace in the region, as well as in the world. The Syrian Embassy in Moscow will be considered accredited to the Russian Federation and, at the same time, will represent Syria to the other states which are signatories of the Alma-Ata Declaration until the necessary administrative steps have been taken to open Syrian embassies in them.

Press Views U.S. Role in Mideast Peace Talks

JN2812074791 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Shamir's Peace is Settlement and Terrorism," the newspaper TISHRIN today comments on the terrorism and panic which the Shamir government seeks to create in the occupied city of Jerusalem. The paper terms this atmosphere a prelude to more grave and serious aggressions aimed at forcing a mass exodus of residents.

TISHRIN adds: What is currently taking place is the antithesis of the peace process. Israeli settlement building has grown immensely. Besides, settlers are creating an atmosphere of terrorism and panic. As for the rejectionist Israelis, they obstructed the Madrid conference and the Washington talks. They are making preparations for the January talks, bent on pursuing an approach based on evasion, procrastination, and refusal to discuss substantive issues, foremost among which are the Palestinian people's rights and withdrawal from the occupied territories.

TISHRIN goes on to say: When they demand that the negotiations venue be moved to the Middle East, Israeli rulers aim to expunge the U.S. role and the U.S. commitment to engage actively in the peace process to bring about the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and realize a just and comprehensive settlement on all fronts on the basis of the land-for-peace principle.

TISHRIN says: Observers who are following events in the United States and elsewhere expect that the peace talks will fail unless the United States plays an effective and firm role to implement the aforesaid Security Council resolutions and make Israel halt settlement endeavors and respond favorably to peace endeavors.

In two separate articles, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH comments on the situation in the occupied Arab territories and the Israeli attempts to thwart peace efforts.

Under the headline "Increasing Escalation," AL-THAWRAH in its first article comments on the new repressive Zionist approach used to confront our people's intifadah in the occupied Arab territories, saying: This only serves to show the black Zionist malice. The commander of the Zionist occupation troops in the West Bank has even gone so far as to threaten to expel more Arabs if the intifadah continues to be stepped up against the Zionist settlers' presence and activities and the Zionist occupation troops' repressive practices.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Regardless of the tyranny, terrorism, and repression being perpetrated by the occupation troops, the intifadah will continue unabated until Israel withdraws from the occupied Arab territories and the Palestinian Arab people are allowed to exercise their legitimate national rights, particularly their right to self-determination.

Under the headline "The Aggressive Approach," AL-THAWRAH affirms in its second article that the Arabs should not show limitless patience over all these aggressive Israeli practices. The paper indicates that the aggressive Israeli approach has not been halted by the ongoing peace efforts. Wondering about the current peace talks, AL-THAWRAH asks: Will the aim of the talks remain unchanged; namely, fixing a venue and date for the talks, without any guarantee that any binding resolutions or outcome will be attained? The newspaper AL-THAWRAH believes that the U.S. Administration does not want its role to be confined to this, especially since it is the party which launched the initiative in this regard and is the sponsor of the peace conference. Also, the paper notes, it is the party calling for the creation of a world order that rejects aggression and occupation with the aim of establishing a world stability and peace that would safeguard peoples' rights.

AL-THAWRAH adds: For the U.S. initiative to succeed, and for the Arabs and the world to see Washington as a credible party, the peoples' rights must be addressed, employing uniform standards, particularly since the American people's interests will be not served by supporting a racist entity that constitutes a financial and ethical burden on them.

Progress Urged Prior to Multilateral Talks

JN2912155491 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 24 Dec 91 p 1

[Editorial: "The Required Arab Position"]

[Text] The first round of Washington talks on the Arab-"Israeli" conflict has ended without any kind of agreement being reached. The Arab delegations were unanimous in saying that "Israel" went to these talks not for the sake of peace, but for other goals, foremost of which was to create a rift in the Arab position at the negotiations and thereby divide any solution.

The Arab delegations have said that throughout the negotiations the "Israelis" insisted on discussing procedural issues, which have nothing to do with the essence of the conflict, with the aim of diluting the negotiations and consequently torpedoing the peace process. Thus, the first round of the Washington negotiations ended without any progress being made toward a just and comprehensive peace. These results prompted U.S. President George Bush to express his frustration and disappointment.

Now that the Arabs are getting ready for the second round of the negotiations, due to be held next month, the overall Arab position must acquire further cohesion and firmness with regard to the fundamentals of the conflict, especially since the Arabs achieved some success at both the Madrid conference and during the Washington talks, success which must now be built upon. They have proved to the entire world that they truly desire to establish a just and comprehensive peace, whereas "Israel's" aggressive and expansionist nature has been exposed.

As we talk about the need to forge a cohesive Arab position, we must note that there are many moves being made here and there to create a loophole in the overall Arab position. It has become apparent that there is a move seeking to hold the multilateral talks before the second round of negotiations has been settled or even before any progress has been achieved. This, certainly, is a very serious matter indeed. It not only means an infiltration into the Arab position, but it also signifies a great service to Israel's new-old objectives to establish its greater state from the Euphrates to the Nile and to transform the Arab region into a Zionist zone of influence.

Therefore, we believe that there is a need for everyone to be aware of what "Israel" is planning, especially since the enemy leaders were very clear when they announced during the Madrid talks that they had come reluctantly. We sincerely ask all Arab brothers to reread the statements Shamir made the day before yesterday, since they faithfully express what Israel wants from the peace talks. Shamir has said, verbatim, that "the mission of Israeli negotiators is to achieve peace without giving up any territory!"

Yes, this is the same old Israeli position, which has remained unchanged throughout the peace process; they insist on having both peace and territory. Consequently, the Arabs are required to reinforce their own position, which rejects any relinquishment of their rights. Indeed, they are required to develop this stand. We believe that they can do this if they want to. Will they do it? They should.

Afghanistan

Missiles Damage Herat, Kabul; Casualties

LD2712174591 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] Four people, including three children, were martyred today and 20 injured by 92 surface-to-surface missiles fired by extremists on the residential areas of Herat.

According to a BIA report from Herat, today's missiles were of the Sakar type that were provided to the sold-out extremists by the military intelligence service of Pakistan contrary to all international norms and standards for the massacre and assassination of our compatriots.

These missiles partially damaged seven houses, one mosque, and several shops; two houses were set on fire.

Seven citizens of Kabul, including women and children, were injured today as a result of the firing by the merciless extremists of nine surface-to-surface missiles.

The BIA military section reported that the injured were quickly transferred to hospitals where they are under intensive medical care and treatment.

These missiles were of the Sakar type and were fired from the north and northeast and landed in the residential areas of the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 11th wards of the city. The missiles also caused severe material damage.

The report adds that the citizens of Kabul, in particular those who suffered losses from today's attacks and those families whose beloved ones were injured as a result of the crime committed by the extremists, expressed their profound repulsion and offered prayer to Almighty God to punish the merciless criminals for their unwarranted evil action that sheds the blood of our innocent compatriots.

Rockets Hit Kabul, Jalalabad

LD2812182691 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The extremists again fired 13 surface-to-surface missiles today on residential regions of Kabul which martyred one person and injured another seven, including women and children.

The BIA military section reported that the injured persons were quickly transferred to hospitals where they were given intensive treatment and care.

Today's missiles, which were fired from the northeast and west landed on residential regions of the 3d, 4th, 7th, 9th, and 11th wards of the city. These missiles, in addition to the loss of life, destroyed four houses belonging to our compatriots. These missiles were of the Sakar type which were put at the disposal of the extremists by the Pakistani militarists for the assassination and massacre of our compatriots contrary to all international norms and standards.

Armed opposition groups fired 41 surface-to-surface Sakar and cluster type rockets into the residential areas of Jalalabad city yesterday and today, resulting in 14 of our compatriots, including children and women, being martyred and 25 others injured.

The BIA military section reports: The rockets destroyed a mosque, a number of houses, and a pharmacy too. Armed forces units based in Nangrahar inflicted reciprocal blows on the positions and concentrations of the extremists as a result of which a number of them perished and their one set of Reactif missiles and a number heavy and light weapons along with a quantity of ammunition were destroyed.

Bangladesh

Border Meeting With Burma Scheduled for 31 Dec

BK2912164091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] A flag meeting between Bangladesh and Myanmar [Burma] will be held at (Mondow) on Tuesday [31 December]. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka today the flag meeting will discuss the raid by [word indistinct], the border security force of Myanmar, inside Bangladeshi territory last Saturday [21 December]. The meeting will be held between the [word indistinct] commander and his Bangladeshi counterpart.

Conveying the decision to attend the flag meeting, Myanmar Foreign Minister Ohn Gyaw told Bangladeshi Ambassador to Yangon [Rangoon] Mustafa Faruq Mohammad that Myanmar ambassador in Dhaka will visit the border area in response to the Bangladeshi proposal. The Myanmar ambassador in Dhaka has gone to Yangon for consultation with his government. He is expected to return to Dhaka on the 2d of next month. On his return to Dhaka, the Myanmar ambassador is expected to visit the border area. The spokesman said the Myanmar authorities have deployed five brigades of army personnel in (Duchittong) and (Mondow) in Myanmar, about 20 km from Teknaf.

Burma Agrees To Meet

BK2912090491 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] Myanmar [Burma] has agreed to attend the proposed flag meeting [meeting of military representatives] with Bangladesh. The border security force of Myanmar yesterday conveyed in writing the decision of its commander to his Bangladesh counterpart. The flag meeting will, however, be held after recovery from illness of commanding officer of Myanmar border security force, Lieutenant Colonel (Tin Nyunt). Bangladesh proposed further meeting under the border arrangements agreement of 1978 following the Burmese troops' attack on a BDR [Bangladesh Rifles] outpost at Rezupara in Bandarban hill district on the 21st of this month, killing one BDR jawan [soldier] and injuring seven others.

The Myanmar ambassador was also called in the Foreign Ministry in Dhaka yesterday to apprise him of Bangladesh's reaction over the border tension.

India

Government 'Firm' on Feb Elections for Punjab

BK2912040091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] The home minister says the center is firm on holding elections in Punjab in February despite possibilities of disturbances during the election period. Talking to newspersons in Nagpur, Mr. S.B. Chavan said the issues of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir will come up for discussion in the National Integration Council meeting on Tuesday. He said the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] can avail of this opportunity to put forward its views. The home minister said the government does not want to stop the BJP Ekta Yatira [Unity March] but the slogans being read during the Ekta Yatira may create problems in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Chavan disclosed that he will be visiting Hyderabad on the 18th of next month to review the working of the coordination committee of five states on the implementation of the special action plan against Naxalites [Maoist guerillas].

Russian Embassy—Yeltsin To Visit Early 1992

BK2712160191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] The Russian president, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, is likely to visit India early next year. This was stated by the minister in the Russian Embassy, Mr. (Aleksandr Karakin), in New Delhi today. Addressing a news conference after the recognition of 12 independent republics by India, Mr. (Karakin) said that a secretary-level team from India will visit Moscow early next month to work out Mr. Yeltsin's visit. He said the team will also discuss the rupee-ruble exchange issue and cooperation in economy, defense, and technology.

Iran

France's Dumas Telephones Ahead of Scheer Visit

LD2712221291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas contacted Mr. Velayati, our foreign affairs minister, by telephone this afternoon. Mr. Dumas said that Mr. Francois Scheer, secretary general of the French Foreign Ministry, will visit Tehran tommorow, as Mr. Dumas' full representative, and at the head of a delegation, in order that he and his Iranian counterpart may sign the memorandum of understanding on the settlement of financial disputes. He will bring a message for our foreign affairs minister.

Mr. Velayati agreed to the suggestion of the French foreign affairs minister's proposal and announced our country's readiness in that regard.

Continuing the telephone conversation, Mr. Dumas said that he will visit Tehran in the near future, after the memorandum of understanding has been signed, in order to exchange views with Iranian officials on bilateral relations and international issues.

Mr. Velayati welcomed this and told his French counterpart that the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to continue dialogue between Tehran and Paris.

Scheer in Tehran To Finalize Talks

LD2812214891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Mr. Francois Scheer, secretary general of the French Foreign Affairs Ministry, arrived in Tehran Saturday night.

He was welcomed by the director of the second office for West European affairs of our country's Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Upon arrival in Tehran, in an exclusive interview with our correspondent, Scheer said that the aim of his visit is to finalize Iranian-French talks on financial disputes between the two countries.

Velayati, Scheer Discuss Relations

LD2912121591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] French Deputy Foreign Minister Francois Scheer, who is in Tehran for negotiations in order to solve the financial dispute and to sign the final agreement of this issue, met separately and held talks with Foreign Minister Velayati and Mr. Va'ezi, the deputy foreign minister in charge of European and American affairs.

In his meeting with Mr. Velayati, Mr. Francois Scheer conveyed the warm greetings of French Foreign Minister Dumas, and announced Dumas' pleasure over his imminent meeting with Mr. Velayati.

During the meeting, Mr. Scheer expressed pleasure over the trend of negotiations between the two countries in order to remove obstacles and to expand ties. Announcing the necessity of increasing contacts and the exchange of views between the Foreign Ministry officials of the two countries after signing the financial agreement, Mr. Scheer stressed understanding and cooperation in the new phase of bilateral relations.

For his part, Mr. Velayati spoke of the current developments in Europe, West Asia, the Persian Gulf, and the Middle East, and referred to the expansion of ties and cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and France as important and beneficial to the two peoples.

Dr. Velayati welcomed the proposal of continuing the exchange of views and cooperation between the authorities of the two countries and stressed: The sensitivity of the situation and the world require that the continuing talks lead to action and the increase of cooperation.

The French deputy foreign minister also held his first round of talks with Mr. Va'ezi, our country's deputy foreign minister in charge of European and American affairs, today. In the meeting, Mr. Scheer, underlining the importance of the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] to the region, said: The IRI is the most important element of stablility and security in the region. He added: The profound developments which are taking place in this part of the world clearly show the importance and the necessity of establishing cooperation with the IRI.

Mr. Mahmud Va'ezi in turn expressed hope that the signing of an agreement on the settlement of the financial dispute would enhance bilateral cooperation to the interest of both countries.

Financial Disputes Resolved

LD2912173791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Text] At the end of a second round of talks between Mr. Francois Scheer, France's deputy foreign minister, and Mr. Mahmud Va'ezi, our deputy foreign minister for Europe and America, a memorandum of understanding for resolving the financial disputes between the two countries was signed this afternoon.

The 12-year financial dispute between the two countries was eventually resolved—after two years of meetings and discussions between the relevant officials in Tehran and Paris—with the signing of a memorandum of understanding consisting of 16 articles and 20 pages. The French Government has agreed to pay another $1 billion to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On the basis of this memorandum of understanding, 48 hours after the signing of the memorandum the French Government will pay $550 million into Iran's account. A further $450 million will be paid in three installments of $150 million in the course of the next Christian year.

After the signing of this memorandum of understanding, Mr. Va'ezi said: With this memorandum of understanding the restrictions on cooperation between the two countries in the various economic and commercial fields will be removed. It should be noted that France has already paid $630 million of its debts to Iran. Hence, that country's payments to Iran will total $1.63 billion.

Doctors Ready To Treat Grand Ayatollah in Iraq

LD2812151391 Tehran IRNA in English 1440 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Iran on Saturday annouced readiness to send a team of specialist doctors to Iraq to treat Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Abolqasem Kho'i whose health condition is said to be deteriorating.

The Medical Disciplinary Organization in a statement released here said, with regards to reports reaching here from inside Iraq on the grand ayatollah's failing health, it was necessary for foreign specialist doctors to diagnose his illness.

The Baghdad regime has refused to allow foreign specialists to visit Iraq for treating Ayatollah Kho'i who is present living in Kufa, near the holy city of Najaf.

If approved by Iraq, the statement said, a team of Iranian physicians will fly to Baghdad to take care of the grand ayatollah.

Diplomat Shot in Iraq Returns to Tehran

LD2712220291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Text] After coordination between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Nations, Mr. Manuchehr Pakayin, an Iranian diplomat serving at the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad, who was shot by the terrorist hypocrites [Mojahedin-e Khalq], arrived in Tehran Friday evening. Mr. Shaykholeslam, deputy foreign affairs minister for African and Middle Eastern affairs, welcomed him at the airport.

The injured Iranian diplomat was taken to the hospital, together with a medical team from our country, for further treatment.

Habibi Urges Iraq To Extradite Envoy's Attackers

LD3012115191 Tehran IRNA in English 1011 GMT 30 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 30, IRNA—First Vice President and government spokesman Hasan Habibi here Monday said that Iran's demand for extradition of the elements involved in the shooting of an Iranian diplomat in Baghdad last week, has been made according to the international conventions and regulations. "We hope that the Iraqi Government which claims to favour establishment of friendly and fraternal relations with Iran, demonstrates good will in practice," Habibi said at his weekly press conference. Iranian diplomat in Baghdad Javad Pak-Ain was shot at and injured by members of the outlawed Munafiqeen (MKO) grouplet on December 23. The failed assassination attempt was a move by the MKO to prevent the return to Iran of a group of penitent members of the grouplet. Turning to exports, Habibi put the value of non-oil exports during the past eight months at dlrs. 1.563 billion, up by 113 percent over the same

period last year. Of the figure, dlrs. 700 million belonged to carpets and handicrafts, increased by three folds compared to the same period last year. On government's measures to conform the next year state budget of over rls. 27 trillion with the five-year development plan, Habibi noted that the government was working to adjust revenues with expenditures and thus lower its borrowings. Comparing output of metal products in the first three quarters of the current year (started March 21, 1991) with the same period last year, he said output of Isfahan steel mill and the national group of steel industries amounted to 2.031 million tons, up by 68 percent over the same period last year. Meanwhile, molten aluminium and casting aluminium products reached 55,300 tons and 84,500 tons this year, an increase of 14 and 21 percent respectively over last year. Moreover, Habibi noted, copper extraction amounted to over 15.834 million tons this year, up by 30 percent over last year. He also pointed to the recent recommendation by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani for delegating management posts to women and expressed hope that women could play an active role in this regard. As for the price of consumer goods, he said that for the time being the government has no plan to lift subsidies on basic goods, and in other items the procedure will be gradual.

Iraqi Jets Reportedly Bomb Several Kurdish Areas

NC2812183991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] The Voice of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan has reported that Iraqi fighter jets bombed several Kurdish areas in northern Iraq. The radio reported today that the bombardment included the al-Qadiriyah area west of Irbil and several other areas. The radio said the bombardment left many dead or wounded, while many others fled their homes in panic. The radio said Western forces deployed in northern Iraq did not react to the Iraqi violation of Security Council resolutions that prohibit Iraqi warplanes from taking off. The radio did not specify the date of the bombardment.

Yazdi Condemns U.S. Position on Bombers' Trial

LD2712164991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1130 GMT 27 Dec 91

[Second Sermon by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi at Friday Prayers at Tehran University on 27 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] There are a few points that I wish to raise in this sermon. As time is limited, I will be very brief. [passage omitted]

The disintegration of the Eastern bloc, the end of the life of the socialist regime of the East, and the coming to power of a number of independent republics—and Mr. Gorbachev's final speech —are noteworthy and important. This is just like a miracle! His Eminence the imam [Khomeyni], may he be admitted to God's paradise, wrote clearly to Gorbachev three years ago saying: Your problem is not economic, it is not the issue of freedom. Your problem is inattention to God and to religion; it is your wrong, Godless ways. Therefore, your problem is that you put faith aside, you put God aside, you put human nature aside. This is your main problem. If you solve this, everything else will be solved. After three years we see that Gorbachev comes along, and in his final resignation speech, with the destruction of the last symbols of that system, he says: The main reason for the disintegration of this system is our inattention to God's blessings in this country. In reality he admits God's role in the administration of the social system of men. This is a very important point. The imam said it in those days, and now Gorbachev says that this is the problem.

Of course, in the same letter there are references to capitalism saying: Do not think that the West can serve as a replacement, or that capitalism is the salvation of humans. No, capitalism is also suffering from pressures such as prostitution and corruption and others. The same thing may happen to the West in the future. In the letter, Khomeyni reiterated: If you want to save your country, in the end you must be careful, you must not think that capitalism is your salvation. [passage omitted, crowd chants in support: death to America, death to Israel]

We offer our greetings on the occasion of the birth of the great prophet, His Holiness Christ, to all his followers. He is among the great prophets; in fact it was he who prophesied the coming of the prophet of Islam. And we are reminded of the statement by His Holiness the imam, may he be accepted to God's paradise. Addressing the followers of that great prophet, Khomneyni said: Look at your deeds and decisions and ask, if His Holiness Christ lived now, would he have accepted them or not. If you think about it, then you can realize to what degree you are a follower of Christ. We hope the world's Christians, especially our country's Christians, succeed in following that prophet properly.

I had several other points in mind to talk about, but I shall put them aside; I will go back to them at another opportunity. However, there is a legal point I think I must talk about, even if it means I must compress my remarks into one or two sentences.

The U.S. national security adviser is following a plan—this is public information of which everybody is aware—to collect some intelligence force [as heard]. He is trying to find co-travellers for a deal with Libya.

The White House spokesman explicitly says that no target in Libya is out of the question. Their judicial authorities say that the said case [against two Libyans charged with blowing up the Pan Am plane over Lockerbie] must be heard only in the United States, or at least in England, where a verdict must be given.

Previously, we spoke a little about that case. What I am going to add is this: When any case is submitted to any court the first point to be investigated is the competence

of the court. If competence is established, then a hearing and verdict can be accepted. But if the competence is defective, then it is not acceptable.

You say that only U.S. or English courts are competent. Libya says an international court is competent. I would now only wish to add one question. If the U.S. courts inside that country are competent to hear that case, then the courts of the Islamic Republic of Iran are definitely competent to hear the case regarding the U.S. attack on the passenger Airbus over the Persian Gulf, as well as the corpses floating on the water. [crowd shouts death to America and death to Israel]

This is not a political debate; it is a completely legal debate. You cannot say that such and such a case must be heard in the United States, whose verdict must also be enforceable, but that the case on the U.S. attack on the Airbus must go to an international court. What is the difference between the two cases? Specify the difference. Was that crime not committed in the Islamic Republic of Iran? Was not the place where the crime took place within the jurisdiction of the Islamic Republic of Iran? If the criterion to determine the competence of a court is the jurisdiction of a sovereign state, well, we must be allowed to take up that case.

As the person in charge of this country's judiciary, I beg to state that, well, it is true that we have already lodged a complaint with the International Court, and the case is going through in The Hague following its normal course. We also accept that such cases must be heard by international courts. But we say to the United States: If you want to exploit this legal issue for political ends, if you want to put pressure on another country, then in fact you are abusing legal debates for political ends. This is a mistake; it is wrong. Either we must be able to do the same, or you should not be able to do it. It is not possible for a principle to apply to some cases and not to others. This is a point to which a serious answer must be given.

Majles Deputies React to Algerian Elections

LD2912113991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Excerpt] The Islamic Consultative Majles representatives congratulated Algerian Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] on its victory in the recent Algerian elections.

During today's session of the Islamic Consultative Majles, a letter from 170 Islamic Consultative Majles representatives addressed to the Muslim and freedom-seeking nation of Algeria was read out.

The letter congratulates the FIS on its victory in the parliamentary elections and adds: That victory does not count only as a victory for the Muslim nation of Algeria, but shows the extensive influence of Muslims in Africa and throughout the Islamic world.

The letter adds: That victory showed that the way to salvation and overcoming political, economic, social, and cultural problems is by following the path of Islam and the Koran. [passage omitted]

Tehran Radio Views Algerian Elections

NC2912202991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 29 Dec 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] The overwhelming victory of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] in the first round of the recent parliamentary elections in Algeria has spawned a whole range of interpretations of developments in that country. The sweeping FIS victory in the first round of parliamentary elections recalls both the impressive showing of the FIS in last year's municipal elections and the poor performance of the ruling National Liberation Front [FLN] in the same elections.

The FIS victory at this stage of parliamentary elections was described by some as sudden and unexpected, but this does not change the fact that it will lead to inevitable changes in the political structure of Algeria. In a large-scale disinformation campaign concerning the results of the Algerian parliamentary elections, Western media made somber predictions about the country's future if the Islamic trend takes power. What the media ignored, however, was that Algerians voted for the FIS candidates because they believe in the Front's principles. Apparently Western media are worried about how current developments in Algeria will affect North Africa. Developments in Algeria must be an inspiration to other Islamic movements in North Africa and the outcome of these developments and changes will not remain confined to that country.

Domestically, the FIS victory has been achieved in the new atmosphere that emerged in the country following its economic reforms and the events of October 1988, an atmosphere in which opposition and popular political forces have been allowed to spring into being. Economic and political conditions in the country and its bitter experience under one-party rule combined to create an atmosphere of reform, a trend that was somewhat reinforced by the radical changes in Eastern Europe. The reforms that have been conducted so far in Algerian society and the FLN's diminished grip on the country's affairs have encouraged various political groups to appear, although in a restrained manner. This trend led to Ahmed Ghozali's appointment as head of a transitional government that still relies heavily on FLN elements.

Considering the role of the Algerian Army on the Algerian political scene and the possibility that the Islamic trend will assume power, it is not unlikely that the Army will oppose current policies. Whether the Army will intervene in the face of these opposition trends is a matter of concern, but generally speaking, it is unlikely that any of the currently influential forces in Algeria will attempt to reverse the course of reforms.